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TUSCULUM COLLEGE

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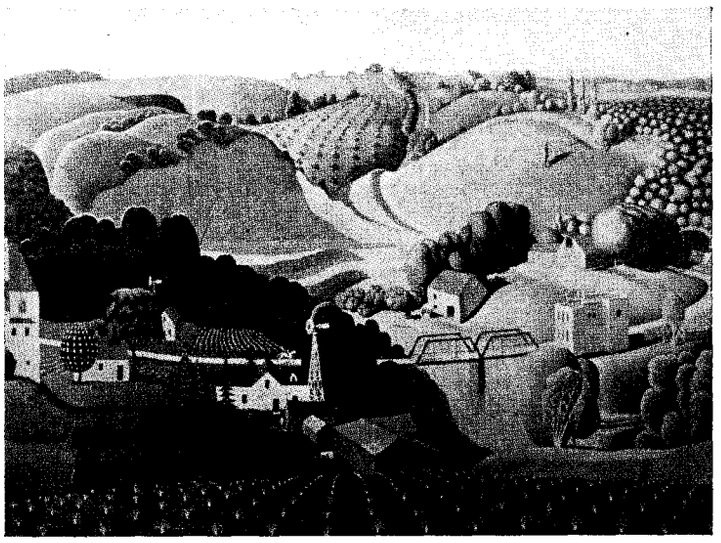
The Trail of the Hawkeye

Literature Where the Tall Corn Grows

BY WALLACE STEGNER



"It is a region of villages and farms, and its people are villagers and farmers . . ." (Stone City, from a painting by Grant Wood.)

THE year 1938 marks the hundredth anniversary of the formation of Iowa Territory by the dissection of the previously-existing Territory of Wisconsin. It also marks the passage of one hundred and fifty years since Julien Dubuque, a French Canadian, obtained a lease of twenty-one acres from the Indians and brought in a company of lead miners to found the first settlement of whites in the state, on the site of the city which now bears his name. Iowa has been a state since 1846.

Anniversaries are classic times for the taking of inventory. But an inventory of Iowa's development tells us little that we didn't know. There has been a tremendous growth of material prosperity. The Iowa legend of tall corn has matured; Iowa hogs have reached a point where one of them could be made the hero of a novel by Phil Stong. Twenty-six colleges and universities have taken root and survived. More than this, there has grown up in Iowa a society probably more rural in its philosophy than that of any state in the union. Ninety-six percent of Iowa is arable farm land, as fertile as any on earth. With a population of two and a half million, the state has no city larger than 175,000, and that city, Des Moines, is almost three times as large as any other Iowa town.

It is a region of villages and farms, and its people are villagers and farmers. The fantastic prices to which Iowa farm land soared until the depression knocked it down again are only one indication of the extent to which land and crops are basic in an Iowan's thinking. And people whose principal interest is the land are likely to look peculiar and backward to other sections of the country where mercantile and industrial interests predominate.

Iowans do. The state has been ridiculed as the home of the original hundred-percenter, a place where violent patriotism, both national and local, is a prized and widespread virtue; a place marked by the survival of Independence Day oratory and lavish produce fairs, a place whose greatest boast is the production of taller corn and huger hogs than any other region in the world.

It has been said that Iowa took pride in little else. Ellis Parker Butler (who incidentally is one Iowa writer with a large and enthusiastic audience in his own state, and whose "Pigs Is Pigs" seems likely to become an enduring minor classic of homely humor) expressed an almost universal opinion of the corn belt's cultural ambitions in his classic motto for the state:

> Ten million yearly for manure,
> But not one cent for literature!

When people spoke of Iowa culture they spoke mirthfully, having in mind the Old Lady from Dubuque, or the combination literary and sewing circles where Iowa housewives, freed by prosperity from household drudgery, hunted the arts in pack. Josephine Herbst, a rebellious Iowan herself, had a great deal of fun some years ago in an *American Mercury* article, lampooning the culture clubs which sought sordid realism with bated breath, and buzzed with indignation when they found it.

But the very existence of the culture clubs should indicate that Iowa has long been proud of other things than corn and hogs. Those same societies over whose prostrate frames Miss Herbst trod so triumphantly still take some measure of patriotic pride in pointing her out as an Iowa writer. Why are they proud? She is successful. Her name is known outside the state. "Nothing Is Sacred," "Money for Love," and "Pity Is Not Enough," although they may titillate the moral indignation of many Iowa readers, are yet too well known elsewhere for the state to repudiate them. So, read or not, Miss Herbst takes her place with the long list of Iowa artists expatriate from the motherland, but cherished in innumerable files of pamphlets, lectures, clippings, reviews, which almost every public library in Iowa keeps handy for the patriotic historians of local literature.

There have been many writers of importance in the past forty or fifty years who can more or less justly be claimed by these patriots, but whose lives and works have wandered away from the corn belt, and who frequently, from Greece or New York or Tahiti, let loose barbed shafts against their native state. Yet they cannot shake their connection with Iowa. The patriots hunt them up, hide the horrid fact of their antecedents how they will, and utilize them as one more prop to local pride.

The revolt from the village, and the corollary revolt of many Iowa writers against their home, needs no explaining. The reason why Iowa readers embrace the serpents who sting them perhaps does. Iowa is, and has been from the beginning, a provincial state, a hick state. Iowans were rubes and they knew it. Until very recently most of them, including the writers, were ashamed of it. In the general selling of civilized birthrights that accompanied the settling of the land, the arts were lost except to a few jealous guardians, women and schoolmasters and preachers. That doesn't tell the whole story, but in essence it holds, and it has been the history of every frontier community. The culture these

Next Week

THE WORLD IS MINE
By WILLIAM BLAKE
Reviewed by Stephen Vincent Benét

WHAT ARE WE TO DO?
By JOHN STRACHEY
Reviewed by Paul H. Douglas

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people preserved came, as Ruth Suckow pointed out some years ago, from the Eastern centers of the higher life, particularly Boston. For generations, therefore, the culture hounds looked nostalgically Eastward, turning up their noses at the life around them, which, though certainly crude enough, was a great deal more genuine than the watered Neo-Anglophilia they cherished. Iowa, like its sister states of the Middle West, has suffered from the colonial complex just as surely as New England suffered from it until the middle of the last century.

Glenway Wescott has described the Middle West as, among other things, "a state of mind of people born where they do not like to live." The twenty-five thousand bona fide Hawkeyes who jammed an Iowa picnic in Long Beach, California, a few years ago are one gauge of that statement. But in many other ways the state where the tall corn grows is the very middle of the Middle West, the quintessence of Middle Westernism. Its ruralism is little relieved by urban and industrial life, its society is extremely homogeneous, despite the variety of racial stocks that flooded in with the settlement. Intellectually and spiritually it awoke later than any of its neighbors, and it is only the last two decades which have witnessed any appreciable diminishing of the colonial complex.

The temptation to regard Iowa's literary history as a kind of miniature reproduction of the literary history of America, to see it as an unformed and hesitant thing at first, groping its way toward maturity and confidence, outgrowing its dependence and timidity and mean opinion of itself, is a great one. But though tempting because of its simplicity, the pattern does not apply absolutely; there are foreshadowings and throwbacks which confuse the lines of development. And if it is hard to find a pattern into which Iowa writers will fit, it is equally hard to know just what an Iowa author is. Ted Robinson, in an article on Ohio writers in *The Saturday Review*, has detailed his difficulties. There is no need to repeat them: they are the same as my own. But in general it has seemed expedient to classify as Iowan those writers who were born and grew up in Iowa, or those who spent so considerable a part of their early lives in the state that they were indelibly marked by their environment.

Probably the earliest writer of any prominence who can by these lights be legitimately considered Iowan is Emerson Hough, born in Newton and educated at the University of Iowa. His first success, "The Mississippi Bubble," appeared in 1902, and his last two, "The Covered Wagon" and "North of Thirty-Six," in 1922 and 1923. Rancher, traveler, historian, conservationist, Hough wrote in all more than twenty-five books and hundreds of magazine stories and articles. He fits no pattern, and he left no recognizable legacies to authors of his state and region except his keen interest in the western migrations of settlers.

The next two in line, however, have both had a profound effect in molding Iowa's opinion of itself and in stimulating other writers. Hamlin Garland (also claimed by the Wisconsin literary clubs) seems to me rather more Iowan than otherwise. Though born in West Salem, Wisconsin, he moved with his family to Iowa in 1868, and spent the whole formative period of his youth, from the age of eight to the age of twenty-one, in Iowa. His books deal with the life of several states, and any consideration of Garland's significance cannot be confined to one or another of them, but the author of "Main Travelled Roads" and "A Son of the Middle Border" certainly belongs in any discussion of purely Iowan literature. As a member of the gifted Midwestern group that gathered in Chicago, and as a forerunner of the many writers who now profess cultural regionalism as a literary creed, Garland is of the first importance.

John T. Frederick "did for fiction . . . what Susan Glaspell and George Cram Cook had done for drama. . . ."

So is his contemporary, Herbert Quick, a Grundy County lawyer who took to authorship in 1902. Less talented than Garland, and cursed with less social conscience and less burning zeal, he produced for almost twenty years a series of comparatively innocuous books, but he kept in his mind an ambition to write in serious and appreciative terms about his native state. Publishers objected that there was no interesting material for fiction in Iowa (the same complaint had been made about America in general as late as 1820). It was not until 1921 that Quick brought himself to the writing of "Vandemark's Folly," to be followed two years later by "The Hawkeyes." Those two books gave Iowa a history. They spoke of Dubuque and Waterloo without apology, as if they were as worthy a place in fiction as Paris or Versailles. Melodramatic and over-heightened as they are, Quick's Iowa novels took Iowa a long stride out of the colonial wilderness.

But Quick was an old man when he wrote those books. They represent one phase of the broadening interest in local subject matter and the local way of life that took place after 1915. Before the war most of the writers the state could boast were either in absentia, or clustered in a few literary centers, and they were interested in other things than exploiting the natural resources of fictional and poetic material immediately around them.

There were such groups early in the century in Iowa City, in Des Moines, in Davenport. Of them all, Davenport produced and attracted the most first-rate figures. Within the space of ten years there were born in this Mississippi River town George Cram Cook, Susan Glaspell, Arthur Davison Ficke, and Harry Hansen. When they were still young and in the first experimental throes of creation, there came to them from outside Floyd Dell, who by working for a few years on a Davenport paper got himself adopted as an Iowa writer, though he was born in Barry, Illinois, and has spent most of his creative life in Chicago and New York. To them, also, from Bryn Mawr, came Cornelia Meigs, an English teacher of almost native antecedents, since she was born just across the river in Rock Island.

At the core of this cluster of people later to be well known was a woman already established and successful as a writer. This was Alice French (Octave Thanet), who had been brought to Davenport at the age of five, and had made her permanent home there. Her writings, even at that time, had experimented with Iowa backgrounds, and as she was a woman in her fifties when her young satellites were in their twenties, she exercised a great deal of influence.

But if Davenport could collect a brilliant group of young writers, it couldn't hold them. College, travel, newspaper work, took all but two. It may or may not be significant that those who left all achieved bigger reputations than the ones who remained. Whether brilliance was a cause or a result of their migration I leave to the scholars. Certainly cross-fertilization and exchange of ideas are essentials for any sound artistic growth, and even though Davenport was by all odds the best place in Iowa for writers to find a favorable environment, it couldn't compete with New York or with the brilliant spirits gathering in Chi-

(*Continued on page* 16)

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The Roadside Manner

THE HORSE AND BUGGY DOCTOR. By Arthur E. Hertzler, M.D. New York: Harper & Brothers. 1938. $2.75.

Reviewed by W. L. WHITE

THIS is almost an autobiography. Certainly it is the complete picture of a man. And the man is worth looking at. In the little town of Halstead, Kansas, there is a small but excellent clinic, which grew up around the surgical genius of Dr. Arthur E. Hertzler, whose professional reputation is deservedly second to none in a five-hundred-mile radius. Starting with these facts, which are not in the book, nor in its apologetic title, we find a fascinating self-portrait of an old scientist who is as tough and gnarled as a sassafras root, with the same homey bitterness in the bite of his wit.

Ostensibly the book is about the practice of medicine, but because this has absorbed practically all the life of Dr. Hertzler and most of his generalizations stem from it, the result is a gorgeously complete self-portrait, even though such conventionalities as names and dates of births, marriage, and deaths are missing.

And it is something else; it is a beautifully satiric picture, seen through Hertzler's keen old eyes, of the average small-bore practitioner of medicine, his foibles, his genuine virtues, and the shenanigans he occasionally pulls on his patients, or his consulting specialists. Dr. Hertzler takes down the hair of the profession completely and yet with a certain wry understanding of the whys and wherefores of it all which gives the book charm. I don't see how any doctor can lay the book down. I am no doctor and I couldn't.

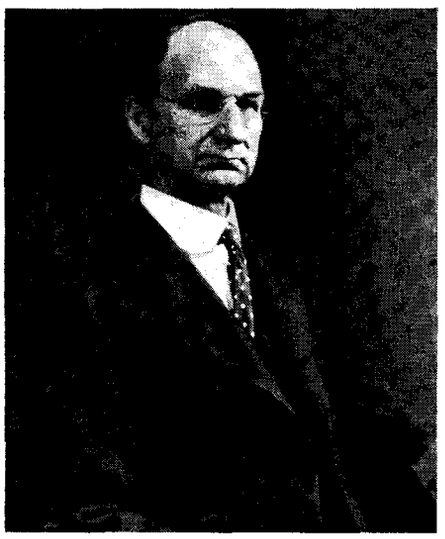
His best chapters are his mellow reminiscences of medicine as it was in his youth, and his accounts of many operations performed in farm kitchens by kerosene lamp light with no other equipment than a sterilized sheet, and a dish-pan full of water boiling on the range for the instruments. His percentages of wound infection were surprisingly low, and led him to the grim conclusion that infection depends more on the time the wound is left open than on the amount of pretty white tile. He sulphurously snorts at the senseless aseptic ritual of fashionable hospitals:

> The latest stunt is to pin a sterile towel on the back of the surgeon. I'll bite—what is it for? I have never seen a surgeon sit on a wound, chances are they do not intend to sit on the wound, but there is nothing like being prepared for all possible contingencies.

Dr. Hertzler can make an operation performed on a kitchen door (removed from its hinges and laid across two saw-bucks) as exciting as a baseball game, and the above quotation is a fair working sample of his style, wit, and philosophy.

Occasionally, of course, Dr. Hertzler nods. When the horse and buggy doctor gets out of the peritoneal cavity into sociology and begins launching at the New Deal there are moments (or so it seems to us starry-eyed brethren) when he gets the tail over the dashboard and its hairs twisted around the whip socket. But the book has one virtue all too rare in its class. It tells of disease and medicine in good, honest, accurately descriptive Anglo-Saxon terms completely intelligible to the layman.

W. L. White is a Kansan, the son of William Allen White, and author of a recent novel, "What People Said."



Dr. Arthur E. Hertzler

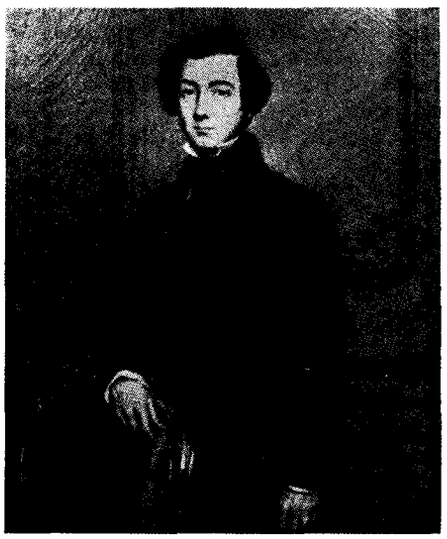
Two Frenchmen in Jackson's America

TOCQUEVILLE AND BEAUMONT IN AMERICA. By George Wilson Pierson. New York: Oxford University Press. 1938. $7.50.

Reviewed by CRANE BRINTON

TOCQUEVILLE'S "De la Démocratie en Amérique," first published in 1835, has long been one of the classics of political writing. It is inevitably bracketed with Bryce's "American Commonwealth" as one of the greatest analytical studies of social and political life in the United States to be written by a foreigner. But though we know a great deal about the Englishman's life in this country, and about the making of his book, we knew hitherto very little about what went into the making of the Frenchman's book. This lack is now completely remedied in Professor Pierson's excellent and detailed study, based on hitherto unused manuscripts of Tocqueville and his traveling companion, another young aristocrat named Beaumont.

Paul Lambert White, like Professor Pierson a scholar from Yale, first unearthed these rich manuscripts, but he died in 1922 before he could make full use of them. Professor Pierson has done an



Alexis Charles Henri Clerel de Tocqueville: "He wanted to know just what made this strange young country go . . ."

independent job, greatly aided by the pioneer work of his predecessor. He has followed the two young Frenchmen step by step and day by day through their nine months in America, supplementing their printed works, diaries, and unpublished letters home by a thorough study of local newspapers in this country, and critical writings about Tocqueville here and abroad. The result is an eight hundred-page monograph of meticulous scholarship which seems to leave nothing untouched that went into the making of a great book.

This description ought not to discourage the general reader. Professor Pierson's is a long and expensive book, but it deserves an audience far wider than most books of its kind get, for it makes most interesting reading. Professor Pierson has two good concluding chapters summing up critical opinion of Tocqueville's work, and adding some sensible comments of his own. But for the most part he lets Tocqueville and Beaumont speak for themselves, supplementing their accounts only where clarity and continuity demand. We have then a fresh, first-hand account of the travels of two intelligent Frenchmen in Jackson's America. But, though the two went out through New York state to the wilds of Michigan and Wisconsin, back into French Canada and New England, and then on a long, hard trip through the Mississippi valley to New Orleans and back through the southern and middle Atlantic states, thus "seeing America" with a completeness rare among foreigners of their day, they were not greatly interested in the look of the country, and their account is not exactly travel literature. They were both intellectuals, and had come to America on a mission to study our prisons. Tocqueville especially seems to have taken the mission seriously, and much of the material Professor Pierson prints deals with this somewhat specialized subject. But Tocqueville had much

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wider interests. He wanted to know just what made this strange young country go, what lessons it held for the future of mankind. He was, in the best sense of the word, a sociologist.

Again, this should not discourage the general reader. Though Tocqueville's mind moved freely in political and social theory, he did not deal in pure abstractions. If he only rarely comments on the scenery, he is always talking with all sorts of people, always keen to observe the ways of men and women. His companion had some talent for sketching, and excellent reproductions of his work enliven the book.

Crane Brinton is a member of the history department of Harvard University.

A Drama of Simple People

THE BRIDGE IN THE JUNGLE. By B. Traven. New York: Alfred A. Knopf. 1938. $2.50.

Reviewed by GRACE FLANDRAU

THIS is a strange and, I think, a remarkable book. It has beauty, it has that rare and truly poetic quality by which the commonest objects are endowed with a special significance, a significance that is an organic part of the form and pattern of the whole. The story too, a curiously absorbing one, is, for at least 280 of the 286 pages, an equally indivisible part of that form, so that one is not superimposed upon the other but both are merely two aspects of one living entity. It is a story of the utmost simplicity and yet, I cannot say why, of the most absorbing interest. Having once begun to read it, you are driven and obsessed by it, and if compelled to put it down you, or at least I, could think of nothing else, but was under some plaguing compulsion to return once more to that intensely real unreal, that actual, fantastic, deeply imagined world Mr. Traven has evoked.

It is, as the jacket blurb will tell you, the story of some simple peasant folk in the jungle region of an unnamed republic of Central America. A handful of these people gather at evening at a power station on a jungle river, and the action of the book covers one night and part of the next day. Once the drama is stated, one proceeds with extraordinary eagerness toward the denouement. In my own case, it was also a curiosity as to how the author would draw together and bring to an end worthy of the consummate artistry of the rest, all the delicate colors of that simple and yet complex pattern. And it was just in that matter of the end that he failed me. Whether from laziness, or from impatience to have done with his intense and perfect effort, he abandons his pattern and takes refuge in a few closing pages of irrelevant and unnecessary "propaganda." Unnecessary because all the social and sociological implications had already been conveyed by the far more potent indirect method.

Incidentally, the issue between so-called "ivory tower" literature and propaganda seems to me badly stated and false. Obviously there can be no question that the more and the wider windows an artist opens upon his world, the better his work will be. The argument, if there must be one, is, I think, purely a question of manner. Should the "propaganda"—if the social and philosophic predispositions of the author must be called that—be implicit or explicit? I believe that it is a fundamental requisite that, to be effective, it should be implicit, in the manner of Dostoievsky or the early Gorky. In every page and paragraph of Mr. Traven's book, he has shown us the plight of those naive, tender, very human, and desperately poor people he is writing of. It was all said before we reached the end. His job, then, was to complete his almost perfect form; to state, however obliquely (preferably obliquely) what I suppose he meant us to understand, that is the dreadful part taken by the idiot brother in the tragedy. But alas, he doesn't. Instead he evades this final effort, to toss off an irrelevant political harangue. But the great talent is there.

Life under the Live Oaks

THIS IS ME, KATHIE. By Julia Truitt Yenni. New York: Reynal & Hitchcock. 1938. $2.

Reviewed by GEORGE STEVENS

MISS YENNI writes her novel as casually as her characters live their lives. Under the live oaks and Spanish moss in the little Louisiana town where Kathie Beecham grew up, life was a pretty off-hand affair. And Miss Yenni is just as engagingly offhand in writing about it. This is part of the genuine charm of the novel, though in the beginning the charm seems to carry too much of the structure. It would have helped this reader, for instance, to find some clue before page 85 that the story was taking place about 1909 instead of much more recently. Kathie's sudden marriage, at seventeen, to the young man who she thought had been courting her beautiful older sister, seemed too unprepared; and her family took an inexplicable attitude—until Miss Yenni identified her period, which explained everything.

Paul Stone—Raymor, Ltd.
Julia Truitt Yenni

Kathie married Daniel McLaughlin—she thought that what she felt must be love, and so it was, in Kathie's way; but there was always a part of her that Daniel couldn't get at: "This is me, Kathie Beecham;" and nobody else was Kathie Beecham. If you think this sounds like a female Peter Pan, if Kathie sounds obnoxiously whimsical, you are wrong. She is very much of a person, and entirely unsentimental; the trouble is that a reviewer cannot describe her without making her seem elfin. Kathie moves over to Dan's house and is more at home with his ramshackle family than she was with her own, which tried harder to keep up appearances. She understands Pops, who takes all the magazines for the prize contests, and Dan's brother Carter, feeble-minded and frightened. When Carter sets the house on fire, Kathie cheerfully moves the family into the rooms over the saloon; but this and everything else she does make talk, and Dan misses his chance of a better job.

The whole story, which loses its quality in synopsis, has a human feeling about it that is warm and humorous without ever gushing or going Cinderella. The feeling is comic, sometimes skirting tragicomedy, but never sentimentality. It is at its best when it is funny, as in Pops's adventure with the chicken house.

The temptation is irresistible to compare "This Is Me, Kathie," with "February Hill." It is a sort of "February Hill" in pastel, without as much earthiness or lustiness. The important part of the comparison is that the two books ought to appeal to the same readers. If you liked "February Hill" you will probably like "This Is Me, Kathie;" the chances are you'll like it anyway.

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Tragedies of Political Life

MY LIFE AS A REBEL. By Angelica Balabanoff. New York: Harper & Bros. 1938. $3.75.

Reviewed by EUGENE LYONS

IN 1897 a nineteen-year-old Russian girl, petite, romantic, intellectually athirst, renounced her share in the family estate and fled from the bourgeois stuffiness of her wealthy home to enlightened Western Europe. Exactly twenty years later she returned to her native land to be acclaimed as one of the foremost European revolutionists, a veteran of the labor struggles in half a dozen countries, an outstanding leader and organizer of anti-war socialists during the World War. In the intervening years her vague rebelliousness had matured to a profound, selfless dedication to the cause of labor and socialism. She had developed into one of the most brilliant orators, writers, and leaders in the Left movement, known wherever the socialist ideal had followers, which meant among millions in all the nations of Europe. The foremost personalities in the movement—Bebel, Plekhanoff, Liebknecht, Rosa Luxemburg, Jaurès, Serrati, etc.—had become her closest friends and collaborators.

Today, after another twenty years, she is once more a voluntary exile from Russia, a refugee from Italy, which had in a sense become her second country, living in a narrow New York hotel room. In the intervening years she had played an important role in the Bolshevik Revolution under Lenin and in the launching of the Third or Communist International, of which she was the first secretary. She had broken with Russian Communism because she recognized sooner and more clearly than others the seed of corruption in Bolshevik methods, the poisonous fruits of which are obvious to everybody today. She had seen the socialist movement in Italy, to which she had given her major energies, smashed by a man whom she had herself retrieved from the gutter and shielded with her compassion: a man named Mussolini. For ten years, living among the Italian refugees in Paris, she had edited in exile the newspaper *Avanti!* which Mussolini and she had edited before the war in Milan.

It is the fascinating and historically significant story of these forty crowded years that Dr. Angelica Balabanoff has compressed into her autobiography, "My Life as a Rebel." It is an epic story, the summary of an era, told simply and forcefully by a wise, courageous, humanly lovable woman. Though there is a modesty amounting at points to shyness in her account of her own activities—the cause she served rather than herself is the theme of the book—Dr. Balabanoff emerges from the pages, despite herself, as a heroine of the human spirit. It is the record of an idealist whose devotion to humanity is so integral to her nature that there is no trace of selfconsciousness in it. The self-seekers, the intriguers and betrayers, seem to her unnatural, while she accepts disinterested sacrifices in herself and others as a matter of course.

The two great tragedies of her life, characteristically, were social rather than personal tragedies. The first was the collapse of international socialism under the impact of war; she remained one of a handful to continue consistently above the battle, true to the purposes formulated in many congresses and preached to the masses for many years. The second was the collapse of the hopes implicit in the Bolshevik Revolution and the launching of the Communist International. She saw the original fervor degenerate into politi-

Angelica Balabanoff

cal intrigue, terror evolving from a necessity into a habit, the greed for power disrupting the unity of world revolutionary forces, and fascism riding roughshod to triumph. Yet she does not count the battle lost or the investment of her life wasted. "The experience of over forty years," she attests, "has only intensified my socialist convictions, and if I had my life to live over again, I would dedicate it to the same objective."

Despite the cumulative defections of those whom she called comrades, there is no bitterness in her story. Only two persons move her to outright detestation: Benito Mussolini and Gregory Zinoviev, first head of the Communist International and ultimately one of the most pathetic victims of Stalin's purges. Her detailed record of these men's conduct and her shrewd analysis of their characters amply justify her feelings.

It is likely that Dr. Balabanoff's close-up of Mussolini, because of its sensational nature, will attract the greatest attention, although in the pattern of her life it is by no means the most important strand. "I had never seen a more wretched-looking human being," she writes of her first glimpse of the dirty, miserably nervous, dejected tramp whom she befriended out of pity. "No one could have foreseen," she writes apologetically, "in this bewildered and neurotic youth of twenty the man who rules Italy today." In the next ten years she learned to know him more closely than any human being then or since. His treachery to the cause into which she had, unwittingly, drawn him was a shattering experience for her. The man whom she tried hard to protect against his own cowardice, boastfulness, and unscrupulous ambitions appears in her circumstantial account of those years quite unlike the Mussolini of the propaganda version. She sees him today as one fulfilling his "desire for revenge on those who were the living witnesses of his own corruption."

Zinoviev, as she describes him and his activities, typifies those psychological elements in Bolshevism which bred careerism, bureaucracy, and sadistic misuse of power. As secretary of the Communist International, she refused to be a party to the dirty intrigues that splintered the world revolutionary and labor organizations and opened the road to fascism. This in turn made her break with the Bolsheviks inevitable. Lenin personally and the Communist Party for years thereafter sought to bring her back to the fold, but her disagreement was on fundamentals, and the lure of power which they dangled before her eyes only drove her further away.

"The tragedy of Russia, and, indirectly of the revolutionary movement in general, began when terror became a habit rather than an act of self-defense," Dr. Balabanoff writes. Sadly she surveys the Soviet events of the last three years, during which practically all of Lenin's associates have been exterminated, and recognizes that her premonitions were correct. While the intrigues to remove her from the leadership of the International were at their height, the American, John Reed, who shared her disenchantment and sorrow over the course of the revolution, told Dr. Balabanoff that the Bolsheviks did not doubt her loyalty—"but neither do they doubt your honesty. It is that they are afraid of."

The temptation is to quote at length the author's intimate pictures of Lenin, Reed, Emma Goldman, Trotsky, Clara Zetkin, Jaurès, Karl Radek, a score of others. Whether as an intimate view of history, or the biography of one of the greatest women revolutionists living, or a close-up of the Left labor movement of Europe, Dr. Balabanoff's memoirs deserve careful reading. Her book, this reviewer is convinced, will take its place among the literary monuments to the grandeur of the human spirit, whatever its immediate reception may be.

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The Saturday Review
of Literature

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How Do You Know You Want to Write?

I have been writing a long time and have learned some things, not only from my long hard work, but from a writing class I had for three years. In this class were all kinds of people: prosperous and poor, stenographers, housewives, salesmen, cultivated people and little servant girls who had never been to high school, timid people and bold ones, slow and quick ones.

This is what I learned: that everybody is talented, original and has something to say.

THIS message of radiant hope comes from a book by Brenda Ueland, "If You Want to Write."* Miss Ueland proceeds to "prove" this contention, and then hands out advice to all mute inglorious Miltons with a view to making them articulate and glorious, not to say successful. For all we know, some of the advice may be useful. A good deal of it is similar to what you will find in various other books for amateur writers who want to become professionals.

That there is a large public demand for this kind of advice is self-evident, and there are not many places to get it. Several hundred people will be packing up their typewriters and manuscripts this summer and spending two weeks at one of the writers' conferences which have become annual institutions in various sections of the country. They will get their manuscripts criticized; they will hear lectures on the problems of the writer (you should always double space your copy; you should never interrupt a passionate dialogue to describe what the heroine was wearing); they will probably hear a celebrated poet read his poems; some of them will have a pleasant vacation; some others will perhaps go home with a feeling of encouragement. Thousands more will stay at home transferring rejected manuscripts into fresh envelopes addressed to other editors. Many of these will seek advice by letter or in person from professional teachers, extension courses, correspondence schools.

*New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons. 1938. $1.75.

It is a big question, whether writing can be taught; *The Saturday Review* has offered some ideas on this subject in the past, and we are not going to repeat them here. Nor is there much use in objecting once again to the perennial process of holding out false hopes to the untalented. When they come in such superlative terms as the last sentence quoted from Miss Ueland, their absurdity is self-evident, and they defeat their own purposes. No doubt the Homer Ziglers of this world will always grasp at straws of encouragement, although even the hero of "The Great American Novel" would have boggled at the idea that "everybody is talented, original and has something to say."

What we are concerned with are not the hopelessly untalented writers but the inadequately talented writers — those whose ability is a cut above Homer Zigler's, those who actually do write their stories, poems, or novels, and occasionally even rise to the level of mediocrity. And we are concerned about them chiefly as potential readers, capable of enjoying good books but too busy writing bad books to read them. Statistics are unavailable, but it is our firm belief that more damage has been done to the cause of reading in this country by the idea that anybody can write than by the competing attractions of the movies and the radio combined. Somehow the impression has got about—and not only from the advertisements of writing schools — that everybody has at least one good story to tell, if only the story of his own life. In addition to this, there is the idea that everybody has a "creative" spark which needs only to be blown upon (gently at first, so that it will not go out) to develop into the divine fire. These convictions have sustained countless writers through the process of composition when the results have brought them little satisfaction, financial or esthetic.

Undoubtedly there are bad writers as well as good writers who go on writing because they must. On the other hand, there are good writers as well as bad who feel no such categorical imperative, who must force themselves to the effort of composition. In between are the mediocre writers, who plod away without much stimulation of any kind, who apparently write from force of habit or lack of imagination. Many of them would get more satisfaction out of reading than out of writing. Many of them are potential readers without enough time to read. That word "creative" has been ruined by the naiveté of literary salesmanship, so that even book reviewers avoid it, but just the same reading can be a creative process. To all amateur writers who feel that they are not getting anywhere, we suggest a vacation from writing, and a program in reading. Two books on the list should be "The Great American Novel," by Clyde Brion Davis, and "Paved with Good Intentions," by Dorothy McCleary. Everyone has been exposed to the question, "How Do You Know You Can't Write?" These two books expose their readers to the subtler question: "How Do You Know You Want to Write?" We suspect that there are plenty of people writing in their spare time who might reply, after a little introspection, that they don't want to write after all. And we also suspect that some others might even learn, from reading, something about writing.

Intimations of Mortality

(On Being Told by the Dentist that "This will be over soon.")

BY PHYLLIS McGINLEY

INDEED, it will soon be over. I shall be done
With the querulous drill, the forceps, the clove-smelling cotton.
I can go forth into fresher air, into sun,
This narrow anguish forgotten.

In twenty minutes or forty or half an hour,
I shall be easy, and proud of my hard-got gold.
But your apple of comfort is eaten by worms, and sour.
Your consolation is cold.

This will not last, and the day will be pleasant after.
I shall dine tonight with a witty and favorite friend.
No doubt tomorrow I shall rinse my mouth with laughter.
And also that will end.

The handful of time that I am charily granted
Will likewise pass, to oblivion duly apprenticed.
Summer will blossom and autumn be faintly enchanted.
Then time for the grave, or the dentist.

Because you are shrewd, my man, and your hand is clever,
You must not believe your words have a charm to spell me.
There was never a half of an hour that lasted forever.
Be quiet. You need not tell me.

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Letters to the Editor: *The Background of "The Woman in White"*

No Lady

SIR:—In your paragraph in Trade Winds (July 9th) praising Mary Roberts Rinehart's "The Wall" you refer to Wilkie Collins's "The Lady [sic] in White." It is not to correct this insignificant slip of the memory that I write, but to say what follows: The Woman in White, judged by the standards of her own day at least, was no lady. No; nor wife, either. It's a long story, but, I think, an interesting one.

"The Woman in White," like many of Collins's novels, was based, in certain particulars, upon fact. In the "Recollections of Wilkie Collins" (*Chambers' Journal*, June 16, 1906) Mr. Wybert Reeve quotes the author as saying:

> I was in Paris, wandering with Charles Dickens. . . . We came to an old book stall . . . and I found some dilapidated volumes of records of French crime, a sort of French "Newgate Calendar." . . . In them I found some of my best plots. "The Woman in White" was one. The plot of that has been called outrageous: the substitution and burial of the mad girl for Lady Clyde, and the incarnation of Lady Clyde as the mad girl. It was true, and it was from the trial of the villain of the plot—Count Fosco of the novel—I got my story.

This incident is well known. Less familiar, however, is the fact that the woman who served as a superficial model for Anne Catherick also lived in the flesh. In "The Life and Letters of John Everett Millais" the artist's son, John G. Millais, writes:

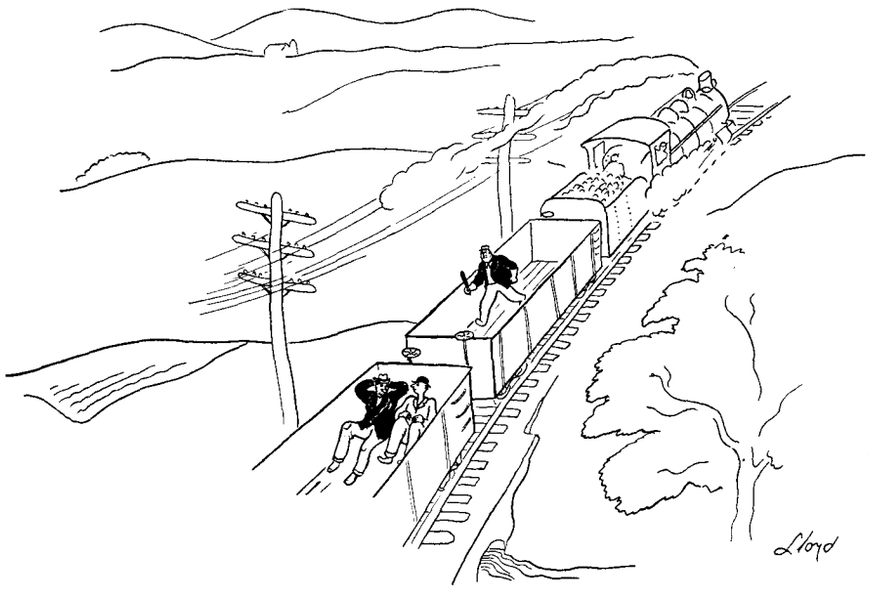
> One night in the fifties Millais was returning home to Gower Street from one of the many parties held under Mrs. Collins's hospitable roof in Hanover Terrace, and, in accordance with the usual practice of the two brothers, Wilkie and Charles, they accompanied him on his homeward walk through the dimly-lit, and in those days semi-rural, roads and lanes of North London. It was a beautiful moonlight night in the summer time, and as the three friends walked along chatting gaily together, they were suddenly arrested by a piercing scream coming from the garden of a villa close at hand. It was evidently a cry of a woman in distress; and while pausing to consider what they should do, the iron gate leading to the garden was dashed open, and from it came the figure of a young and very beautiful woman dressed in flowing white robes that shone in the moonlight. She seemed to float rather than to run in their direction, and, on coming up to the three young men, she paused for a moment in an attitude of supplication and terror. Then, seeming to recollect herself, she suddenly moved on and vanished in the shadows cast upon the road. "What a lovely woman!" was all Millais could say. "I must see who she is and what's the matter," said Wilkie Collins, as, without another word, he dashed off after her. His two companions waited in vain for his return, and next day, when they met again, he seemed indisposed to talk of his adventure. They gathered from him, however, that he had come up with the lovely fugitive and heard from her own lips the history of her life and the cause of her sudden flight. She was a young lady of good birth and position, who had accidentally fallen into the hands of a man living in a villa in Regent's Park. There for many months he kept her prisoner under threats and mesmeric influences of so alarming a character that she dared not attempt to escape, until, in sheer desperation, she fled from the brute, who, with a poker in his hand, threatened to dash her brains out. Her subsequent history, interesting as it is, is not for these pages.

The last sentence, suggestive of Victorian reticence, may be significant; for of the above passage Mr. S. M. Ellis, in his "Wilkie Collins, Le Fanu, and Others" (hideous criticism but containing some biographical material), states: "It is open to conjecture if this Woman in White so gallantly rescued by Wilkie Collins was the same lady who henceforth lived with him. I understand that Dickens's daughter, Kate, who married Wilkie Collins's brother, Charles, used to intimate that it was so."

If this fact is true—although part of Millais's account, especially that dealing with mesmeric influences and threats of dashing brains out, sounds a bit like Collins's fiction—then Wilkie's novel just couldn't have been called "The LADY in White"!

DAVID KISER.

Crafton, Pa.



"I wish I had a good detective story."

The Judge Replies

SIR:—Put down "The Lady in White" reference to temporary aberration on the part of the judge. It has been plaguing him ever since it blazed upon his eye balls from the printed page of the July 9th issue. Quite evidently the gal was not a lady on any count.

JUDGE LYNCH.

New York City.

Borah and Idaho

SIR:—There has been called to my attention an article on the Federal Writers' Project in *The Saturday Review* of July 9th. The statement by Mr. Bolles that I dislike Senator Borah and therefore omitted his name from the "Idaho Encyclopedia" is a preposterous non sequitur. Far from disliking Senator Borah I hold him in high esteem; and his omission from the Encyclopedia was inevitable, inasmuch as there was no section dealing with statesmen.

I should like also to suggest that Borah and Idaho have been synonymous for so long for persons outside the state that it seems to be assumed that any volume relating to Idaho must mention him. As long as Idaho, back East, means only Borah and potatoes perhaps we should bracket these two items in a frontispiece in every book or pamphlet relating to the State.

Inasmuch as Mr. Bolles's inference is unfair to both the Senator and to me, I shall appreciate it if you can make a correction somewhere in the pages of your journal.

VARDIS FISHER.

Boise, Idaho.

Teaching Adults to Read

SIR:—I wish Edwin R. Embree had added "and in public libraries" to the last sentence of his excellent article "Can College Graduates Read?" In public libraries we discover that many above average and superior readers come from homes where there are no books, because there is no money to buy them.

Free courses in teaching adults how to read should be instituted, perhaps in public libraries, if the great idea of adult or self-education for the masses of adults out of school is to become a success.

MARGARET FULMER, *Librarian.*

Parmly Billings Memorial Library
Billings, Mont.

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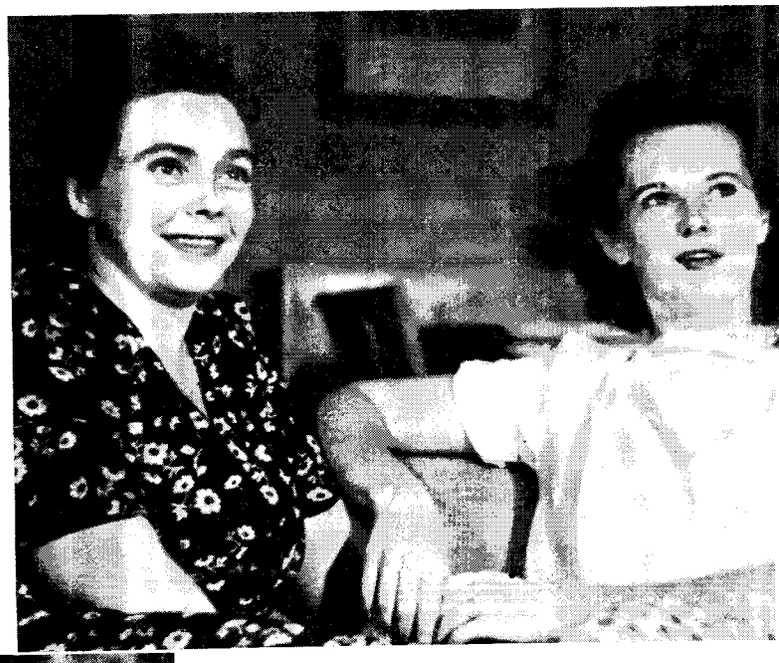
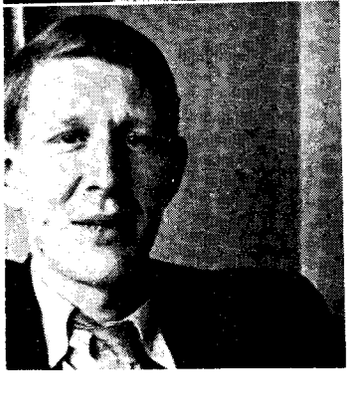
From Atlanta, Margaret Mitchell (above) meets the press at her first New York interview (*Trade Winds*, July 9) since the publication of "Gone with the Wind." . . . From Denver, Clyde Brion Davis (right), author of "The Great American Novel," on a swing through the East. His next book is a boys' story.

Phyllis Crawford (above), former library editor and later on the Federal Arts Project, now a $3,000 prize-winner for the MS. of her children's book, "Hello, the Boat!" coming in October.





Ruth McKenney (above, left), author of "My Sister Eileen," photographed with the principal character of her book. The adventures of the McKenney girls are giving readers some of the best laughs of the season. . . . (Below) Kathryn Hulme, who wrote "We Lived as Children," outside Rockefeller Center.

Poet at a party: four shots of W. H. Auden (left) in conversation at a literary tea; above, his traveling companion, Christopher Isherwood, on Fifth Avenue. Messrs. Auden and Isherwood were recently in New York, returning to England after a trip around the world, including several months in the Orient. They are collaborating on a book about China. *(Saturday Review News Pictures of the Month by Robert Disraeli)*

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Nobody Reads in Hammocks

BY MARGARET CULKIN BANNING

Margaret Culkin Banning

MAYBE they do in the navy. I don't know about that. But the hammock that used to be swung between the horse-chestnut and the maple, or from two hooks at the end of the porch, that gay and shapeless string contraption which could bear such unlikely weights, doesn't seem to be popular any more. The last time I used a hammock for my reading it was to put three books in one which was slung along the train windows in a Pullman berth. But the next night, on a stream-line train, I discovered that hammocks have disappeared from really modern sleeping cars as completely as they have from the orchard.

The person who takes his ease out of doors today has found new devices for his pleasure and comfort. We have upholstered swinging couches, and steel chairs that are almost plastic, and bamboo chairs covered with brilliant, water-repellent fabrics that not only fit the human form in repose but set it off to advantage. Whenever and wherever we can afford it, we emphasize color and effect. But it is not only a sophisticated and luxurious taste which has been responsible for abandoning the hammock. If you drive through any mill village you will see a hard wooden swing dangling from steel chains beside many a door. Rarely will you see a hammock.

Hammocks are neither practical enough nor decorative enough for the modern recreational mood. There still is one, I think, in my father's attic. But on his old porch there now is a glider swing covered with striped canvas. In the same attic are some of the books which are as out of use and far from popular taste as the hammock in which presumably they used to be read.

It seems to make a kind of pattern. The passing of the hammock has gone along with the passing of a certain kind of reading. As recreation has changed, so has the reading which is done for pleasure. The effortless day dream, the lazy, gentle provocation of romance that never went as far as actual lust, belonged to the hammock period. Even in the full-length hammock posture, skirts were long enough and plenty enough to provide for modesty.

Nor was the hammock a fitting place to consider your problems or those of the world. The essay that picked no quarrel with you, that didn't square up to mind, whose ideas rocked quietly along with you until you fell asleep, was all right in the hammock. But it does not fit so well into the activity of the modern summer veranda, with its sport clothes, and tables of drinks, and cars waiting at the curb, and radio press reports coming through an open window.

Only the sentimentalist will really regret the lost hammock. It was never very comfortable unless you filled it up with pillows and these were continually slipping into maladjustment as your body asserted itself. The hammock was cramping in almost any position, bad for one person, worse for two. It must have not only limited courting but given it very absurd moments. Also hammocks were usually hung in places in yards and gardens where bugs could get at the occupants with the most extreme ease. If the hammock was on the porch, it was so close to the house, and to the rest of the family, that a person could never be sure of being completely undisturbed. Finally, hammocks made a great many people slightly nauseated. It is hard to mourn them.

The odd thing is the persistence of the phrase "hammock reading," even after the string swings have become practically extinct. Recently I came across those words nine times in two issues of newspaper book sections. The phrase evidently has developed a meaning which is now more classic than slang. It means pleasurable reading that will do you no great good and do you no great harm, but just swing you gently back and forth. It is the kind of reading which you can and will do when you are not working. It ought not to be confused with escape literature, at least not to the point of identification. We do not escape to our pleasures. We seek them. Hammock reading, as the words are commonly used, might possibly be defined as reading which belongs to an idle rest period.

But to lie on your back and swing back and forth is no longer considered an ideal rest. That kind of leisure is not in great demand. Nearly everyone wants to do more than that with his free time. He wants to make the most of his summer holiday or of his half days off. Usually he wants to get away from home, to go to some place where he doesn't live. If he stays home, he wants to put in his time improving some game or enjoying some favorite sport. Or, at least, he plans to do so. The stamp of all this is on what is still rather unjustly called hammock reading.

Such reading is not as negligible as it used to be. It is not intended to be just a time killer, even if it works out to have no greater destiny. Leisure reading is coming to have the same purposes as have other leisure occupations. It is not work. But its object is to make a reader not only enjoy himself but feel more fit when he gets back to work. After a holiday, he should have better spirits, find his tensions relaxed; and, if he is lucky, he has become acquainted with some new place or met an interesting stranger. It is worth taking a look at contemporary summer reading, for it seems to prove from one more angle how a literature reflects not only the mind but the habits of its generation.

The first noticeable thing is a change in the style of even the "light book." Its

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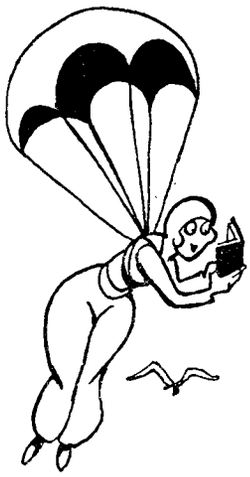
form is better. It is more suited to its own purposes of diversion, in the same way that even cheap sport clothes are suited to their purposes. The second obvious thing is that just as most vacations are no longer considered merely loafing periods for the body, so it is with minds. Reading has adjusted to this. The bookseller and editor and publisher apparently think—if their advertisements are any guides—that the public mind will use its holidays for travel and for exercise and that these diversions are no longer the privileges of the few but of the many.

Pick up two or three books which are listed briefly as "romances" and described as "hammock reading" and they may surprise you. The literary fabric of which they are made is likely to be pretty flimsy and the prose doesn't hold the seams together very well, but often the effect is good and shows that the book has been copied from some good model. Some people are too fastidious to tolerate a cheap copy, but that is snobbishness. Everyone cannot afford the best and has not been trained in discrimination. And since by such approaches great numbers of people do arrive at standards of good taste, we ought to be democratically grateful that popular taste knows what it wants its books to resemble even if they aren't the real thing.

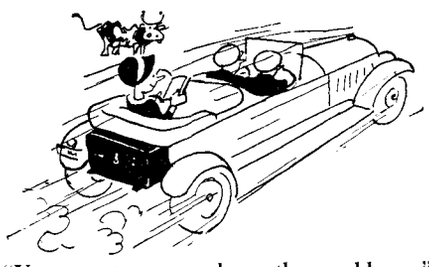


"Some books have no brakes..."

To be specific, there is more color and cleverness in summer reading than there used to be. There is greater frankness and simplicity. There is more realism. There aren't so many literary petticoats on a story and more appear in verbal shorts and slacks. Readers are not as naive and shy and inhibited as the people who used to rock the hammocks, and that shows in what they read. And in recreational reading as well as in living today there is a growing sense of what is fun and good exercise.

The direction is right. It can be followed a long way, as far as your capabilities. For more and more people are learning how much can be done with even a little time and money when it comes to vacations and to vacation reading. It doesn't take a fortune to go to Europe. A second-hand car will take you to every beautiful place in the country. Literature is just as adjustable to the budget. You don't have to lie down in the shade and go to sleep. You can get out and see the world, even if you have little education and not much money.

The new books and the best books are increasingly available in every kind of binding. There are hundreds of lending libraries and racks and stands of good, inexpensive magazines. For a very little money, or possibly just by using the wits, anyone can have good leisure-time reading with plenty of color and activity.



"You can get out and see the world . . ." (Drawings on this page by A. B. Walker, reproduced by courtesy of *Harper's Magazine.*)

That is the best of it. But if the pleasures of summer—including its reading—have become more energized and less flabby and better directed, they have also become more dangerous. There is an obvious lack of restraint and even of decency in some places which try to capitalize on leisure. No doubt it is a good thing that country highways have become so accessible to great numbers of travelers, but it is a pity that they have also become spotted with cheap taverns and resorts which offer the most dubious and transient enjoyment. People would be far safer lying in old string hammocks and letting the mosquitoes bite them than they are in some of these haunts. But they have lost their taste for the hammock. They go for a ride. In the days when the hammock meant a ladylike leisure, no well-bred woman took a drink. And twenty-five miles was a journey instead of just a breath of air. We have changed all that.

The reading analogy is not far-fetched here. There was mental safety in some of those books that used to be read in hammocks, that didn't quite tell the truth, and dressed up sentiment and were more silly than passionate. But safe or not, they no longer interest people. If we get used to covering great distances physically, we want to do it mentally. A person who breaks the speed limit in one way will do it in another. He or she wants an erotic book, a violent book, a book that goes farther or faster than he has ever gone in print before.

If he can handle his mind and his car—and if he is lucky—he may not have any accidents. But there is no doubt that summer reading is not the innocuous thing it used to be when the pace was slower. The dangerous part of summer reading is that some books have no brakes and that some actually have dope in them and that very young people cannot always be kept away from either sort. These risks have been created inevitably as the literature of the hammock was abandoned, but for all that I think the gains outweigh them. For the modern emphasis is on mental and physical health and on using leisure time to improve both kinds.

"The modern emphasis is on mental and physical health . . ."

From there on it is an individual business to make plans for leisure reading. Each person knows how much time he has, what he can spend, where he would prefer to go, what will do him most good, who will go along. The point is that a leisure period ought to leave the person who has it at his disposal conscious of having actually rested and experienced some change from routine.

If for you this means reading "The Conquest of Civilization," why not? If for me it means "The Nutmeg Tree" or "The Men Who Lead Labor," why not? In reading, one man's rest may be another man's daily labor. "The Citadel," "The House That Hitler Built," "The Yearling," "Rachel's Children," all may be summer reading. Everyone doesn't want to go to the same place for his holiday. If it is most restoring to go back to the same place where you played when you were young, why not read Dickens over again and see what happens now? If you are tired of printed, full-length pages, read the captions in "Uriel for President," or go off for the summer with "Ferdinand." The point is that nobody ought to get your holiday from you, and its test is the result on your well being.

"Nobody reads in hammocks."

What is supposed to be leisure reading should not leave the mind with a hang-over. Nor exhausted even from its pleasures. The bright ones will choose to read those things which do for the mind what exercise, travel, and temporary freedom from habitual work should do. The disappearance of the hammock means that we have learned to relax in better ways. The passing of a stultified, languorous, formalized summer reading is no loss. There is no point in spending a holiday, even a mental one, rocking back and forth, falling asleep or becoming slightly nauseated. Nobody reads in hammocks any more.

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Walpurgisnacht

MONDAY NIGHT. By Kay Boyle. New York: Harcourt, Brace & Co. 1938. $2.50.

Reviewed by BASIL DAVENPORT

THIS is an attempt to combine those two essentially modern forms, the psychological horror story and the psychological detective story; and one may still say that this attempt has never been successfully made. At the beginning, Wilt, an expatriate drunkard of the kind who is always going to write, and Bernie, just out of medical school at home, are hunting all across Paris for a Dr. Sylvestre, a toxicologist of such eminence that his testimony alone, sometimes contradicting his colleagues, has convicted a number of murderers. Bernie wants to meet him as a man of medicine; Wilt is interested in how he feels when he knows that he has sent a man to the guillotine. At last they talk to his servants, especially the butler, who describes Sylvestre's unhappy home, and Sylvestre's grief when he has been obliged to testify against the murderer. This passage, even more than the rest of the book, is amazingly over-written; impressions like this pass through Wilt's mind: "And I too, I too, rose the marvelous music of the butler's grief in that articulation which Bernie could not hear . . . I have survived mutilated as he is mutilated"—out of sheer sympathy with his employer. Suddenly, and with no more evidence than this, Wilt realizes that Sylvestre is a warped soul who deliberately bears false witness against the innocent, and sets out to repair the miscarriages of justice; by a singularly happy coincidence, he does not have to go far enough to see that his task is impossible, for the morning papers carry suprising news.

This sudden reversal view of a character, the revelation of the ambiguity of an action, like the ambiguity of John Jasper's protectiveness toward Edwin Drood, or Benito Cereno's devotion to the captain in Melville's little and little-known masterpiece, could be the foundation of an excellent story. But the foundation of such a story should be its credibility; and that is entirely lacking here. Sylvestre, as an unknown druggist, could never have contradicted an eminent physician who was actually right; Wilt could not have perceived Sylvestre's guilt with no more evidence than the unheard melodies of the butler's unspoken grief. The final coincidence is of course not beyond the bounds of possibility, but it is against all the canons of fiction. And Sylvestre's motivation is even less credible than his murders.

Realizing, perhaps, that her book is not satisfactory as a horrifying detective story, the author has tried to build up the horror in the earlier scenes. There is a curious counterpoint about the cycle tour of France, which appears to have no connection with the story, but about which we are expected to feel a disproportionate amount of emotion, as indeed, we are about everything in the book.

Like "Dracula," "Monday Night" makes the mistake of beginning at the top of its voice, and of having only a thin, forced scream left for its climax, after all our drunken fights and drunken rides. This again might be an effective Walpurgisnacht, difficult as that is to achieve, but the horror one feels in a bad dream or a bad drunken bout simply have nothing to do with the horror one should feel at murder, which depends on one's belief in the murder as reality and not phantasm. Miss Boyle has confused the emotions of the murder story, which demand realism to be effective, with the emotions of the nightmare, to convey which demands only genius; but neither of the emotional values is here.

Experiment in Living

SEEK-NO-FURTHER. By Constance Robertson. New York: Farrar & Rinehart. 1938. $2.50.

Reviewed by AMY LOVEMAN

THE dream which has persisted throughout the ages of a society in which men should walk in the ways of God and none should work for self but all should hold the good things of the earth in common had its flowering in the America of the last century in various communal groups which sprang up throughout the country. None, perhaps, of the organizations which had their birth then worked out a more striking experiment than the Oneida Community of John Humphrey Noyes and his perfectionists, a community which, shorn of some of its most distinctive features, still exists today as a successful business enterprise. In her introduction to this novel, Mrs. Robertson, who is the granddaughter of Noyes, disclaims the Oneida Community as the sole prototype for her story, asserting that for the settlement depicted in it she drew upon a variety of communities, using of one some incident, of another some tenet, and of still others their practices and policies. Her tale thus constitutes a composite picture—"a period piece," she calls it—rather than the chronicle of a specific incident in American annals. However, that may be, it is an authentic and highly interesting cross-section of national history, an illuminating portrayal of a temper of mind and manner of living.

It is, indeed, as history rather than as fiction that "Seek-No-Further" is effective. It has a tale to tell, to be sure, which has interest and at times dramatic intensity, the story of the son of the community's chief who, returned from Yale, finds himself out of sympathy with some of the beliefs of his father and of the girl he loves, who is a religious maniac. The battle of conscience between them, the attempt of the young man to rescue his sweetheart from the influence of a member whose mission it is to construct a messianic electrical machine, endowed with perpetual motion by a virgin who has been overshadowed by the Holy

"None should work for self but all should hold the good things of the earth in common . . ." (From the title page of "Seek-No-Further.")

Ghost, the uprising of the neighborhood against this man, and the expulsion of him from the community—these are the main features of the plot. Mrs. Robertson has succeeded in awaking a sense of horror of the machine and of pity for the girl caught in the toils of her own religious emotionalism; she has made the relations between the community and the outside world vivid and exciting, and she has projected occasional scenes between individuals which are lively and vigorous. But her character drawing is weak, and her delineation of emotion and of psychological interrelationships in the main lacks vitality and quickness. It is the rich and revealing description of the life of the community which gives her book distinction. That is arresting in the glimpse it affords into a society wise and admirable in many ways, mistaken and absurd in others. So fascinating is the background material that it carries the story when the story could not carry it. Anyone can read this book with interest; everyone must read it with respect for the idealistic yearnings of the human soul and amazement at the vagaries of the human mind.

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Four from the Sea

CASTAWAY BOATS. By Captain Victor Slocum. Illustrated by Charles Rosner. New York: Lee Furman. 1938. $3.

THE MAKING OF A SAILOR: The Photographic Story of Schoolships under Sail. By Alan J. Villiers. New York: William Morrow & Co. 1938. $4.

SAILING MADE EASY — Told in Pictures. By Rufus G. Smith, Photography by Walter Civardi. New York: Kennedy Bros. 1938. $3.50.

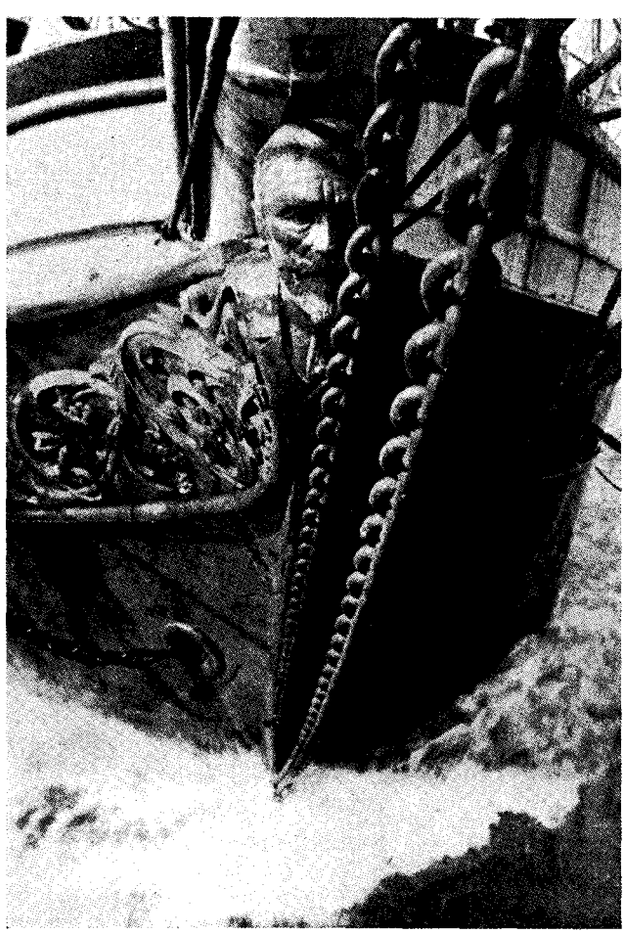
SHIPS AND WATER, Compiled and edited by Alfred A. Dé Lardi, Philadelphia: David McKay Co. 1938. $3.

Reviewed by ALEXANDER CROSBY BROWN

LOVERS of the sea in general and of sailing craft in particular will find here a welcome assortment of summer reading matter for the cabin bookshelf. In the first volume, Captain Victor Slocum, son of the doughty Joshua, who was the first man to sail alone around the world and whose classic on the famous little *Spray* is still the standard, has collected some fourteen episodes of castaway boats and has retold their adventures in his own words. The author is at his best in his introduction, where he recounts a voyage which he himself experienced when sailing as mate with his father in the Bark *Aquidneck* in 1888. They were shipwrecked on the coast of Brazil, and out of material saved from the wreck a 35-foot boat was built which successfully carried back to the United States the Slocum family of four. Experience gained on this remarkable 5,000-mile voyage, coupled with a full life spent in following the sea, has given the author a real appreciation of the problems and hazards facing those who have been forced to take to the boats to save their lives and has, he feels, qualified him to recount the adventures of others.

Those whose familiarity with the subject of long voyages in small, open boats ends with the recently highly publicized *Bounty* episode would be astonished to learn of some of the kindred feats of seamanship which have been accomplished. Disaster voyages were, of course, more common in early times, but one of the episodes selected for this book tells of Sir Ernest Shackleton's perilous trip in Antarctic seas in 1916. The author might well have included the even more recent voyage of the S.S. *Travessa's* boats in 1923. Small boat voyages resulting from almost every type of sea disaster are represented in the book, however. The *Lord Eldon's* crew sailed back to land from a burning ship; the castaway mariners of the *Antelope* built a schooner out of wreckage on a coral atoll; one man of five in the *Saginaw's* gig survived to reach port and apprise the authorities of the desperate condition of his fellow mariners, shipwrecked and starving on a speck of land in mid-Pacific. There are others too in which human fortitude triumphed under the most desperate conditions, still others tell of dark deeds and cannibalism on the high seas.

The author tells his stories well, but as is to be expected there are unavoidable parallelisms in the several voyages, tending to undermine the epic plane intended which cannot be well sustained without monotony. Many readers whose first introduction to some of the episodes may come from this book might regret that the author's acknowledgment of source material is perfunctory and incomplete. It is unfortunate that the author should have chosen to use, with limited space at his disposal, the sagas of the *Jeanette* and the *Bounty*, accounts of which have been so recently published in the Ellsberg and Nordhoff-Hall chronicles, with which it must be admitted Captain Slocum's accounts cannot compare. Likewise unfortunate is his selection of the final episode, which is an anticlimax.



"The carved figurehead of Joseph Conrad gazes serenely ahead." (From "The Making of a Sailor.")

Alan Villiers's new book, "The Making of a Sailor," consists of preface and 15 pages of text, the balance being given over to almost 200 of the author's uniformly good photographs. About three quarters of these were taken on the 1934-36 trip around the world of the little full-rigger *Joseph Conrad*, whose adventures are already familiar to readers of the "Cruise of the *Conrad*" published last year. The remainder of the photographs are of the school ship *Georg Stage II*, successor to the *Conrad* in training young mariners for the Danish merchant marine. Fortunately the modern trend in trick photography has escaped Captain Villiers, and his pictures are straightforward, well taken, and of a sort that would delight the trained eye of the indefatigable seaman brought up in sail, despite a seeming monotony to the uninitiated.

The publishers of *Yachting* have given us still another useful book which heeds the Chinese proverb of the superior value of pictures to words. In "Sailing Made Easy," Mr. Smith has assembled a large group of specially taken photographs which well demonstrate the various steps which must be mastered to handle a small sailing yacht properly. Primarily designed for the novice, nevertheless this book will surprise old hands with its fund of information which they might have forgotten or never learned. "Sailing Made Easy" is a creditable piece of work.

The fourth volume under review is likewise a book of photographs, but here no instruction is intended. Alfred A. Dé Lardi is the compiler and Joseph C. Lincoln, well known Cape Codder, contributes the one-page introduction which is the only text. The sea is represented here in all her many moods, ranging from the majesty of Pacific rollers dashing themselves shoreward against Tahiti's barrier reefs to the quiet, homely simplicity of a landlocked New England fishing harbor. These photographs are well reproduced and most of them are indescribably lovely.

Irritating, however, is a mild word to apply to the incredibly stupid index system used in the book.

Alexander Crosby Brown is Corresponding Secretary of The Mariners' Museum, Newport News, Va.

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Rousseau's Self-Portrait

THE CONFESSIONS OF J. J. ROUSSEAU. Revised and completed by A. S. B. Glover. London: The Nonesuch Press. 1938. 2 vols. $22.50.

Reviewed by ERNEST BOYD

THESE two handsome volumes, bound in unpolished calf, with tasteful wood-engravings by Reynolds Stone, contain a reprint of the anonymous contemporary translation first published in two parts in 1783 and 1790. Mr. A. S. B. Glover has revised and completed the translation and added some useful notes, but he has preserved its eighteenth century quality, which has made of it one of the standard English translations of a French classic. In an appreciative yet critical introduction, Havelock Ellis sets the work in the perspective of the author's life and times, and occasionally corrects some of the self-libels for which Rousseau made himself alone responsible by inserting them in these Confessions. Mr. Ellis states, for example, that it is extremely doubtful whether Rousseau was or could have been the father of the children whom he allegedly placed in a foundling hospital.

From Voltaire to Irving Babbitt the opponents of Rousseau have been numerous, yet his influence has concededly been enormous, affecting such diverse figures as Kant, Wordsworth, Thomas Paine, Schiller, Robespierre, and more naturally, Chateaubriand and Byron. Few people nowadays read "Emile" or "The Social Contract," and many will find it hard to believe that the early years of the nineteenth century owed more to Rousseau than to his only, but much greater, competitor of the eighteenth century, Voltaire. Voltaire's appeal was to the mind rather than to the emotions, whereas Rousseau was all emotion, a violent reaction against eighteenth century rationalism, and the inevitable father of the Romantic Movement. When he tried to reason, he was childish, as his preposterous "Lettre sur les Spectacles" and his socio-philosophical writings show. Hence the survival of these Confessions as his masterpiece. He could present ideas only in terms of actual living.

It would, however, be difficult to find a life that more miserably failed to realize his theories than Rousseau's. "A plebeian and a fool," Brunetière called him, and so he seemed to his contemporaries and to all the host of his posthumous denigrators whose findings were duly collated in Babbitt's "Rousseau and Romanticism." He was a liar and a thief, a coward and a lackey. He quarreled with his best friends and benefactors, Diderot, Mme. d'Epinay, Baron Grimm, and even Hume, after he came to England. After living with an illiterate kitchen-maid called Theresa Le Vasseur for twenty-five years, he married her, imagined (according to Ellis) that he was the father of her five children, and was neglected by her in favor of a stable-boy. Theresa was overfond of the bottle and took not the faintest interest in his (to her) incomprehensible work. Yet even in these Confessions he refers to her as a paragon of Nature's unspoiled simplicity.

What is in this work and in the general teaching of Rousseau that has exercised such an influence? In the Confessions specifically we have not only, as Rousseau claimed for it, the first absolutely sincere self-portrait in literature, but also, as Ellis says, an early effort at what might by a stretch of language be described as psychoanalysis. Factually his account of himself is frequently wrong in detail, but the effect upon him of his various experiences from childhood onwards is convincingly expounded and lucidly analyzed. Despite his temporary conversion to Catholicism, for purely opportunistic reasons, Rousseau was too profoundly Calvinist to lose his essential Protestantism. No Catholic could have written the Confessions. They have just that suspicion of evangelical self-righteousness in the admission of wrong-doing which is characteristic of so many sinners at revival meetings.

It was Byron who wrote of the only rival volume of Confessions:

> Saint Augustine in his confessions,
> Makes the reader envy his Transgressions.

That is not true of Rousseau. No one will envy him his petty vices or his obviously masochistic pleasure in corporal punishment. What one is expected to do is to contemplate the wicked sinner who always means so well and whose true instincts are thwarted by the malign machinations of society. "Man is good, but men are bad." The genesis in himself of all his theories of government, education, and religion, is here. He humanized the theories of Locke and Montesquieu and expressed them in a form very close to that adopted by the nineteenth century humanitarians when they attempted to bring their message to the people. His doctrine is essentially that which still lies at the root of Protestant democracy, the rights of the individual, an unbounded belief in the perfectibility of the common man.

In "The Social Contract" Rousseau attempted to resolve the problem of individual happiness within the framework of a social state. This work could be quoted to their advantage by all parties, and his characteristic comment was that "they who boast that they understand the whole of it are cleverer than I am." As I have said, it is in his Confessions rather than in his theoretically more abstract writings that the quintessence of Rousseauism is found. That he himself foresaw this is evident from a passage in one of his dialogues, which explicitly states that without a knowledge of the man himself his doctrines are obscure. "I dwelt less," says the interlocutor, "on a direct examination of this doctrine than on its relation to the character of the man whose name it bore. . . . In short, it was necessary for a man to portray himself in order thus to display primitive man, and if the author had not been as unusual as his books, he would never have written them. . . . If you had not described your Jean-Jacques for me, I should have believed that natural man no longer existed." At least all can agree that the Confessions of Rousseau is the unforgettable portrait of a very natural man.

Life in Latin Poetry

THREE ROMAN POETS: Plautus, Catullus, Ovid. By F. A. Wright. New York: E. P. Dutton & Co. 1938. $2.65.

Reviewed by ELMER DAVIS

THIS scholarly but highly readable volume by Professor Wright, late of the University of London, is an excellent advertisement for what are discouragingly termed the classics. He skips the major classical authors—Lucretius, Horace, Vergil—because they led fairly calm lives and aimed at moral uplift; and discusses, instead three men who experienced plenty of vicissitudes and two of whom aimed only at entertaining the customers. With Professor Wright's judgment of Catullus this reviewer continues to disagree; Plautus and Ovid may have been content to "make their readers smile," but the work by which Catullus is remembered was mostly aimed at individual readers, and he wanted to make them yelp. (As they all did, except Caesar.) But anybody who cares about Catullus will find here a thorough biography and a highly intelligent critique.

Still more entertaining are Professor Wright's discussions of Ovid, the Scott Fitzgerald of Rome, who wrote a whole book about the (highly exaggerated) miseries of exile in a town which has since named its principal square for him; a town which he would find no bad substitute for Baiae if he went there now. And above all of Plautus, the ex-actor who had to turn his hand to playwriting when he was demobilized, and suited his plays to the taste of a post-war world hungry for normalcy and amusement. He seems to have invented rhyme and he practically invented Italian literature; which, after several centuries of distraction by an effort to imitate the Greeks, finally came back to the Plautine characters and language.

Copious specimens of the works of all the authors are given in translation, and even readers with no interest in Latin poetry will enjoy Mr. Wright's dry comments on ancient and modern society.

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The Trail of the Hawkeye

(*Continued from page 4*)

cago. By 1908 both Dell and Hansen were Chicago newspapermen. The careers of Susan Glaspell and George Cram Cook are sufficiently well known. Susan Glaspell's plays, Cook's brilliant conversational ability and magnetic personality, their elevation of the Little Theater into something live and strong, belong not to the literary history of Iowa, but to that of the United States. Nevertheless, the works of these two are among Iowa's proudest possessions, and they will still show you the place where George Cram Cook had a vision in the library stacks at Iowa City. "The Road to the Temple" begins, Iowans will tell you, on the banks of the Mississippi.

Here are two important writers and an original idea out of Iowa. They come out of Davenport, but they don't happen there. In that generation the Iowa writer was still a migratory bird, laying her eggs a long way from her birthplace.

One might add to these any number of other wanderers, of the Glaspell-Cook generation and later. Carl Van Vechten was born in Cedar Rapids, but has spent his mature life in New York. When he finally, after numerous books on cats, Spanish music, theatrical history and appreciation, and the like, returned to Iowa for fictional material, the result was "The Tattooed Countess," banned from the Cedar Rapids library. That book, like many another, is a satirical picture of the dullness, stupidity, smugness, fatuity, and all-around clod-hopperishness of the Iowa town. It is part of the revolt from the village.

The sun never sets on wandering Iowa authors. "The Able McLaughlins," Harper Prize novel in 1923, Pulitzer Prize in 1924, stems from Traer, Iowa, via India, where Margaret Wilson spent several years as a missionary. And the whole stream of James Norman Hall's books, ending in the Bounty trilogy and "Hurricane," is a product of Colfax, Iowa, by way of England, France, the Lafayette Escadrille, and the South Seas. Josephine Herbst I have already mentioned. Rupert Hughes, by virtue of a boyhood spent in Keokuk, has had his five foot shelf of writings placed in the Iowa collections.

Of the post-war generation of writers in Iowa it is possible to say this with confidence: they consistently choose to utilize the materials of their local environment for fiction and poetry, and they show an increasing willingness to live in the state they were born in. Iowa has become as fit a subject for books, and as reputable a state for a writer to live in, as any other. If there is a slight hysteria accompanying the liberation, it can be understood, and it will pass. Cultural regionalism is the philosophy of many Iowa writers today, but the movement is liberalizing rather than the reverse. In a society moving toward complete industrial regimentation there is a profound need for the preservation of healthy provincialisms, as Josiah Royce pointed out as far back as 1902.

Properly to understand the background of the writings of Ruth Suckow, Phil Stong, Tom Duncan, Paul Engle, Winifred Van Etten, James Hearst, Jay G. Sigmund, and a good many more, we must go back to 1915, to Iowa City. In that year and that small university town, John Towner Frederick, then an undergraduate, conceived, and with the help of professors and others brought out, a little magazine called *The Midland*, dedicated to furnishing an outlet for honest and serious writing about the Middle West. This, the first of the little magazines with a regional aim, achieved in eighteen years a reputation far out of proportion to its expensiveness or appearance. In an article in *American Prefaces* some weeks ago Charles Allen lists a few of the "discoveries" made in the height of *The Midland's* career. Among the Iowans Mr. Allen notices MacKinlay Kantor, Paul Engle, Phil Stong, James Hearst, and Marquis Childs (the latter a student at Iowa at the time). Others include James Farrell, David Cornel De Jong, Albert Halper, and Clifford Bragdon.

In effect, John T. Frederick and his friends on *The Midland* did for fiction, through the little magazine, what Susan Glaspell and George Cram Cook had done for drama through the little theater. But the regional flavor not only of Frederick's magazine but of his own novels ("Druida," "The Green Bush," "The Stockade"), and the fact that his work had been done in and for Iowa and the Middle West, have made this unselfish and helpful critic and editor the greatest single force in Iowa letters in the past twenty-five years.

I have mentioned some of the writers who owe to John T. Frederick much of their confidence in dealing with local materials. There is another man, Lewis Worthington Smith, a professor at Drake University, to whom a whole group of Des Moines youngsters owe much. Smith, a poet, critic, and editor himself, kept alive an interest in writing at Drake for many years, until it finally flowered in a number of nationally known writers. Phil Stong, whose "State Fair" was a kind of triumph of simple localism, is one of that group, and though he chooses to live in Connecticut, his choice of Iowa as a locale for stories and novels has been consistent and sympathetic. Similarly Tom Duncan, author of "Oh Chautauqua!" and several volumes of sturdy verse, made use in his novel of the rural entertainments of Iowa. State fairs and chautauquas, Iowa hogs and Iowa countrymen in their square-toed Sunday best, belong to the same category as Ruth Suckow's "Iowa Interiors," "The Odyssey of a Nice Girl," "Country People," and "The Kramer Girls." They are part of the literary awakening to which James Hearst's "Countrymen," Paul Engle's "American Song," Winifred Van Etten's "I Am the Fox," and Margaret Wilson's "The Able McLaughlins" belong. Artistically, this awakening in literature is paralleled by the regional painting of Grant Wood, now professor of art at the University of Iowa.

One other writer, properly a member of the Des Moines group, must be mentioned. He is MacKinlay Kantor, who though never a student at Drake and never under Smith's direct influence, associated himself with Tom Duncan and the other writers of the capital. Kantor has never exercised himself too much over Iowa materials. From his youth upward he has been fascinated by Civil War stories, and his writing has leaned in that direction. But he got his start by winning a short story contest sponsored by the Des Moines *Register;* he worked on newspapers in Webster City and Des Moines; he lived for a time in an abandoned farm house and wrote furiously. "Diversey," "El Goes South," and "The Jaybird" gave him something of a reputation. "Long Remember" and "The Voice of Bugle Ann" clinched it. Without ploughing as earnestly as Phil Stong and Tom Duncan in the Iowa soil, Kantor is an integral part of that Des Moines group.

And this brings us to a second literary "movement" in Iowa—or rather, to a continuation of the one begun by Frederick, Edwin Ford Piper, Frank Luther Mott, and others. This movement, centered like the first in Iowa City, is built around the School of Letters, directed by Norman Foerster. Aiming at offering a broad education in the humanities, the School of Letters from its inception in 1930 has encouraged creative writing. One result has been the development of a group that may in time become as well known as the Davenport group of a generation before.

Even in the twenties, it was possible for students at Iowa to obtain higher degrees with imaginative theses. Only one, however, tried it. Josephine Donovan offered her novel, "Black Earth," as a Master's thesis in 1929. It was accepted, but before she could finish the degree the novel was bought for publication, won a two-thousand-dollar prize, and was being dickered for by the movies. So Miss Donovan lost interest in the academic M.A. But after 1930 the creative thesis was expanded into a planned system. Edwin Ford Piper began to be flooded with volumes of verse, collections of stories, novels. Paul Engle and Richard Maibaum were among the first experimental cluster of student writers. In all, there have been something over forty imaginative theses offered and accepted for both M.A. and Ph.D. degrees.

In 1935, feeling an increasing need for a magazine like the old *Midland,* the School of Letters and the Graduate College subsidized a periodical called *American Prefaces,* edited by Wilbur Schramm. *American Prefaces* has taken up where *The Midland* left off. It has maintained

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a high standard, has been flattered by Edward J. O'Brien as one of the best fiction magazines in the country, and has offered an outlet for the shorter work of the group of writers congregated in Iowa City, as well as for the good work of unknowns from outside. Here is an example, a unique one, I think, of the creation of a favorable literary environment within academic halls.

As additional stimulations the School of Letters imports men of national reputation as lecturers or "tame poets" or conductors of round table discussions. Such diverse people as Stephen Vincent Benét and Vardis Fisher have been in residence. There are two practising poets of distinction, Piper and Paul Engle, on the staff. Grant Wood's studio is open to visitors and his conversation is free—and freely given. In the past two years four novels, a volume of verse, and a collection of essays, all of them offered as theses, have been either published or accepted for publication by Eastern houses. The recent "Brazos," by Ross Taylor, is a Ph.D. thesis. (I hope this revelation won't hurt its sales!) And I imagine that more will be heard, in the next few years, from such young writers as Herbert Krause, Helene Magaret, Eleanor Saltzman, Robert Whitehand, Wilbur Schramm, Charles Allen, George Abbe, and Edward Weismuller.

The emergence of Iowa as a conscious intellectual and literary region gave rise some years ago to the phrase, "the Iowa Renaissance." It has not been a renaissance in any sense of the word: there has been nothing to be reborn from, but only a long and slow awakening, through three generations of writers, to maturity and self-sufficiency. The environment of Iowa no longer looks stifling. There are definitely spots in the state where literary people congregate. The rather general tendency of those who a generation ago revolted from the village to reverse themselves and revolt from regimented industrial cities, has accelerated the growth of literature in Iowa. Cultural regionalism is the dominant creed, not only of Grant Wood and his satellite artists, but of many writers, but there seems little of the aggressive sectionalism that has colored the literature of the South.

Iowa has had no literary renaissance, but it has definitely come of age. And the homogeneity of the state, the stability and conservatism of its society, the unbroken tradition of people living in much the same way for four generations, gives a solid cultural earth for the artists to dig in. That seems to me the one profoundly essential element in lasting art. That, plus a congenial intellectual environment for the artist such as the state university is offering, ought to be sufficient reason for a good deal of hopefulness about the future of Iowa literature.

Wallace Stegner won the Little, Brown prize for an American novelette last year with his "Remembering Laughter."

Racketeer's Wedding Day

SIGNING OFF. By John T. McIntyre. New York: Farrar & Rinehart. 1938. $2.50.

Reviewed by N. L. ROTHMAN

MR. McINTYRE has developed a naturalistic style peculiarly his own, and we have watched him apply it with unflagging sureness of touch in his three latest novels. In terms of technique it is clear that whatever he writes will be a sound and successful piece of work. But there is another element in his writing more variable than style. We can call it aim. What raised "Ferment" above the level of just good craftsmanship was the ambitious quality it had of coming to grips with basic matters, of aiming to express some of the inexpressible confusion of these days. "Signing Off" lacks ambition and is dwarfed by the lack. Everything else is here that Mr. McIntyre can give: the living dialogue which is the special adornment of his stories, the diverse throng of characters, even a plot scheme of unusual compactness, with the action contained within the space of a day. All of this skillful, smooth-geared writing machinery, clicking away only to produce a routine story about a racketeer mixed up in a love triangle, who is murdered on his wedding day by the brother of the other woman. It is not that this story is necessarily pointless, or could not be made the core of a good novel. The trouble is that Mr. McIntyre accepts it wholly upon its narrative merits. He expends all of his technical virtuosity, which is considerable, upon telling the story straight and unaccented. What might have been a sharp, exciting short story is set before us in minute detail as though, in the process of expansion, something new and significant might appear. It does not.

From another point of view, "Signing Off" is far from uninteresting. As has been suggested, Mr. McIntyre's novels have a continuity of style and subject matter. They deal with the intricate, dark corners of cities, with small fry and devious petty politics, with shop-keepers and bartenders, racketeers, cops on the beat, labor squabbles, the city ferment. Most of this is revealed not so much in any plot mechanism as in the qualities of those gnarled characters who move in and out of the stories in twos and threes, each fully developed and articulate. Their talk is a kind of oral history of their life and times. "Signing Off" is as rich in these details as its predecessors; in this sense it may be regarded as a minor panel in the larger picture Mr. McIntyre's novels make in their entirety.

The story of a small-town family that forgot itself for a week

And in that week old loves, old acquaintances, and old responsibilities were swept away, while they indulged in new and untasted pleasures. A delightful yarn as truly American as *State Fair*. "Grandma Samantha Johnson alone is worth the price of admission."—*Lewis Gannett*. "An admirable novel . . . very exciting."—*Wm. Lyon Phelps*. $2.50

Old Home Week

by MINNIE HITE MOODY

author of Death Is a Little Man, Towers With Ivy, etc.

JULIAN MESSNER, INC., 8 W. 40 ST., NEW YORK

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Negro Education

THE NEGRO COLLEGE GRADUATE. By Charles S. Johnson. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press. 1938. $3.

Reviewed by EDWIN R. EMBREE

FORTY-FOUR thousand Negroes have been graduated from American colleges and universities. This may not seem like a large number out of a total population of twelve million. But it must be remembered that this racial group in America is only two generations removed from chattel slavery. Assimilation into the national life, starting from almost zero seventy years ago, has proceeded steadily and in recent years swiftly. The first Negro college graduate in America was John Russwurm, who took his degree from Bowdoin in 1826. During the next twenty years there were only seven more colored graduates of recognized colleges, and in 1860 at the outbreak of the Civil War there had been but twenty-eight. At emancipation all opportunities were theoretically opened to Negroes. But no edict could give real independence to a people. Slowly and painfully the Negro has had to win his own independence and status, and he has done so during the past two generations in America to an extent probably unequalled by any large group in all of human history. Negroes are still at great disadvantage as compared with other members of the American commonwealth. But their rise during the past seventy years in education and in their general contributions to civilization is spectacular.

Dr. Charles S. Johnson, himself a prize example of the attainments of the modern Negro scholar, has in "The Negro College Graduate," issued by the University of North Carolina Press, presented a careful analysis of the progress of the race in one aspect, that of formal higher education. This study of Dr. Johnson's traces the steadily growing stream of college graduates from the first degree given one hundred and twelve years ago to the 2,194 degrees given to Negroes in the single year 1936.

Following emancipation there was a rush of missionary endeavor to establish schools for the freed men. But these institutions, often hopefully called colleges and universities, were concerned during the early years with elementary and primary teaching. Often hundreds of ex-slaves poured into these new "colleges": men, women, and children all together struggling over a, b, c's and puzzling out one-syllable words from primers. Not until the beginning of the present century did many of these institutions become colleges in fact, and only during the past twenty years have they been educating any considerable number of students of college grade. During the past decade as many Negroes have been graduated from colleges and professional schools as during all the three hundred preceding years that Negroes were in America.

In addition to the special Negro colleges in the Southern states, many members of the race have been graduated from the general "coeducational" institutions of the North. Of the total, somewhat over thirty-seven thousand have been graduated from the specifically Negro colleges and some six thousand five hundred from the general Northern universities. While the number of Negro graduates of general institutions has held around three or four hundred for the past fifteen years, that of graduates from the Southern Negro colleges has been rapidly soaring, from 500 in the year 1916 to 1,000 in 1926 to 2,000 in 1936.

In America we are apt to regard graduation from college as proof in itself of attainment and achievement. Dr. Johnson has gone beyond the mere matter of college enrollments and tried to appraise the success of Negro graduates in adjusting themselves to the national life and in winning distinction. He points out that because of prejudice and caste there are limits to Negro participation in almost every phase of American life and that the cultivated Negroes are apt to feel these limitations and discrimination most keenly. The Negro graduate therefore faces many tensions that are not met by his white fellow collegians or by the less cultivated brethren of his own race. In spite of these acute psychological bars, the record shows a gratifying degree of achievement by the Negro college graduate as contrasted with members of the race who have not had formal higher education. This is true in the distinctions that several hundred Negroes have already received in American life. It is also true in such a humble sphere as unemployment during the depression. In a special study of the State of New Jersey, it was found that only 5.4 per cent of Negro college graduate families had male members unemployed in 1932, as compared with 37.5 per cent of male members of all Negro families. In the country as a whole at this same period, only four per cent of Negro graduates were found unemployed as compared with 17.8 per cent of the total Negro population.

After a fascinating discussion of college education and its objectives for the population as a whole and for the Negro in particular, Dr. Johnson concludes:

> Education for the Negro should orient him in the larger world, should give him new and higher wants. It should at the same time give to his personal, family, and racial life that inner harmony and deepened spirituality which is relatively independent of and superior to material conditions, and which is the ultimate of all human life.

SOLUTION OF LAST WEEKS DOUBLE-CROSTIC (No. 226)

S. T. COLERIDGE:
"FEARS IN SOLITUDE."

O my Mother Isle! . . .
There lives nor form nor feeling in my soul
Unborrowed from my country! O divine
And beauteous island! thou hast been my sole
And most magnificent temple, in the which
I walk with awe, and sing my stately songs.

Anecdotes of Edison

EDISON'S OPEN DOOR. By Alfred O. Tate. New York: E. P. Dutton & Co. 1938. $3.

Reviewed by E. D. KENNEDY

IT is natural enough for a man who has been associated with a great man to write a book about the great man. But the great man should be the hero and the book should illuminate his career and his character. Mr. Tate worked for Thomas A. Edison from 1883 to 1894. He has not succeeded, however, in giving either an intimate personal portrait of Edison or a critical study of Edison's failure to become a great industrialist as well as a great inventor. Instead, Mr. Tate has written what he himself describes as "reminiscences." His book is not biography. It is not history. It is chiefly anecdotes—mostly dull and badly written anecdotes about a great many uninteresting people whom Mr. Tate has, at one time or another, met. The result is a rambling, incoherent narrative from which even Mr. Tate does not emerge as much of a personality and from which Mr. Edison does not emerge at all.

There is one point at which Mr. Tate's story might have been significant, but at this point—despite the publisher's blurb to the contrary—he dodged his issue so completely that he might better not have raised it. Edison's most valuable industrial patent was his patent on the incandescent light. This patent he sold to the Edison General Electric Co., in which he was the largest individual stockholder—not, however, owning a majority of the stock. An early rival of the Edison company was the Thomson-Houston Co., chief exponent of the arc-light, which Edison correctly regarded as inferior to the incandescent light. For several years, off and on, there were rumors that the two companies might merge. But Edison, a rampant individualist, would not listen to any such idea. Eventually the Thomson-Houston people, headed by Charles A. Coffin and Henry Villard, rounded up enough of the Edison company's stock to put through the merger without Edison's knowledge. Furthermore, the new company was called the General Electric Co. (it still is), and operated with Mr. Coffin at its head. Edison, furious at losing control of his company, sold his General Electric stock and lost the proceeds in an unsuccessful venture in crushing iron ore.

Here is a good story of the entrepreneur forced out by the banker. It is a particularly good story because, at the time of the merger, the Edison General Electric Co. was managed by Samuel Insull, and even if Edison did not know what was happening to his company, Insull should have been better informed. But Mr. Tate by no means furnishes any "inside"—or hardly even an outside—story of what went on. After a heavy preliminary build-up he gives the actual story less space than he awards to several of his trivial anecdotes, and then applies a heavy coat of whitewash all around.

Otherwise, the book contains little that is either amusing or significant.

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Fountain of Youth in a Box of Pills

NEW CREATIONS IN HUMAN BEINGS. By Louis Berman, M.D. New York: Doubleday, Doran & Co. 1938. $3.

Reviewed by HOMER W. SMITH

THE recent discovery and elucidation of the role of the glands of internal secretion (thyroid, parathyroid, pituitary, pineal, adrenals, thymus, gonads, etc.) in the development and functional activity of the body can fairly be called a disordered scientific revolution. Literally thousands of investigators have plunged into the field of experimental endocrinology to obtain miraculous results, to contradict each other, to further confound what was inherently an extremely complex problem. Here at last, it would seem, in the powerful chemical catalysts which these glands secrete and which so profoundly affect all the activities of the body, are the Alchemist's Dream corked up in a test tube, the Magician's Wand and the Fountain of Youth in a hypodermic syringe and a pill box. Granting that this enthusiasm is partially warranted, the subject of endocrinology is still closer to chaos than to order.

Dr. Berman has here put together nearly every fact related directly or indirectly to this subject. After an extended indictment of man as an organism, he discusses the nature of the endocrines and their role in physiology and pathology, and in features that contribute to personality: physique and beauty, vitality and energy, intelligence and imagination, sex and maturity, aging and revitalization. Nearly all that is certainly known about the subject of endocrinology is included, together with much that is hoped for, a great deal that is surmised, and not a little that is sheer speculation. Speculation, surmise, and hope are indiscriminately intermingled with fact, and individual case histories—so impressive to the lay reader, so unimpressive to the investigator who is aware of the spontaneities, irregularities, and complexities of the problem—are expanded into generalizations with no counterbalancing enumeration of failures. Clinical endocrinology is, with a very few exceptions such as thyroid therapy, no older than seventeen years, and much of it (pineal, ovarian, adrenal, etc.) has not ten full years to its credit; the diagnosis of endocrine disturbances is still largely a matter of guesswork, and the adjustment of dosage, and more particularly the interpretation of interglandular derangements, is in most cases pure speculation. It is perhaps because of the author's enthusiasm for the future of the subject that he seems to lay so little stress upon its present difficulties and uncertainties.

The ultimate motive of the book is to point the way to the improvement of mankind. The thesis is that where religion, politics, education, and eugenics must fail, glandular treatment will succeed. It is for the physician to teach the citizen what can be done in the way of modifying physique and appearance, vitality and energy, intelligence, sexuality, maturity and socialization, aging and revitalization, etc. by this means.

The chemistry of personality can and will transform the inadequate and inferior of societies—and who is there among us not in some way inadequate or inferior?—into the materials of the durable civilization upon which mankind can build its way to the stars.

Before this concluding sentence, the author has remarked, "It has always been said that there is no making of a silk purse out of a pig's skin. But chemistry has turned cotton and wood into something very much like silk." But still it is *not* silk, and the failure to recognize this fact may be the weak point in this particular ladder to the stars.

Helping Youth to Help Themselves

A NEW DEAL FOR YOUTH. The Story of the National Youth Administration. By Betty and Ernest K. Lindley. New York: The Viking Press. 1938. $3.

Reviewed by RAYMOND G. FULLER

THIS is both a narrative and a descriptive account of the National Youth Administration, with special reference to the job it has done. It was written in response to the desire of the National Advisory Committee of the NYA "for an independent survey of the activities" of that organization. The emphasis is on the needs and problems of youth and on the services that the NYA has tried to render.

Local work projects and the system of student aid are described. Results are shown by statistics and case stories. No attempt is made to prove that the NYA has done, or is doing, an adequate or a perfect job. Here and there are to be found both criticisms and suggestions. It is questioned whether student aid should be given in higher educational institutions except to supplement substantial scholarships. It is suggested that a consolidation of the present NYA and CCC programs might desirably be brought about under one administration.

No doubt is felt by the authors that the task undertaken was from the first not only a useful but a necessary one, and that it must somehow, under some auspices, be continued. They find that, for the most part, the recipients of aid have needed and deserved it. The NYA has demonstrated, they say, that these youths, given the chance, show a willingness, often an eagerness, to work, to learn, and to assume their responsibilities in this civilization. Further:

> If NYA were to cease to function, thousands of college students of superior ability would be forced to leave college. Many thousands of high school girls and boys also would drop out. . . . The annual investment that NYA is making in the less privileged youth of the United States is less than the cost of one battleship.

This, in some quarters, will doubtless be called propaganda. But if it be propaganda, it is of a kind that cannot easily be gainsaid. The book is an important contribution to the understanding of the present youth problem and of the public obligation regarding it.

A History of Lynching

JUDGE LYNCH: HIS FIRST HUNDRED YEARS. By Frank Shay. New York: Ives Washburn. 1938. $2.50.

Reviewed by OSWALD GARRISON VILLARD

IT is a pity that Mr. Shay's recital of the horrible record of the lynchers of America did not appear a little earlier, in time for use against those Southern Senators who so outrageously abused the Senate's right to unlimited debate as to kill by a filibuster the anti-lynching measure which they well knew a majority of their fellow Senators desired to pass. Mr. Shay has not brought together any new facts or statistics for these have been recorded again and again. His is not as deep nor as thoughtful a volume, or as scientific a one, as Walter White's "Rope and Faggot." But it does tell the story in a more popular and perhaps dramatic fashion and it is to be hoped that this will give it a wide circulation. How any American can read it and not be horrified that the things therein recorded have happened since the very beginning of our Republic is something beyond me. It seems as if every decent citizen ought to be willing to do something to end what is not merely illegal killing of both whites and blacks, but a lawlessness deeply colored by perversity and sadism.

As for the Northern belief in many quarters that lynching is only resorted to because courts are unreliable and slow and is used almost exclusively when a Negro attacks a white woman, Mr. Shay has contributed his share to the demolition of these theories. He lists many utterly trivial causes of lynchings, such as being impudent to a white man and writing a letter to a white woman. Unfortunately no writer on this subject can tell us exactly how many of the victims

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were innocent, but that the percentage runs high is indisputable. Take the case of Robert Johnson in Bluefield, West Virginia. When charged with rape of a white girl he presented an alibi and proved it. The girl who had minutely described the clothing of her assailant naturally did not identify Johnson. Thereupon the police took Johnson and *dressed him up to fit the girl's description.* The girl then identified him and the police permitted the mob first to abuse Johnson and then hang this innocent man.

Today lynching has taken on a new and dangerous phase which Mr. Shay well brings out. It is being used against labor organizers, against men, white and black, whose sole offense is to dare to demand higher wages and that right to collective bargaining which has now been decreed by the Congress. In many Southern States, notably in Florida, and also in California, terrorism and lynching are used to keep pitifully underpaid peons in complete economic servitude and to bar out unions. If this continues long the class struggle will be gravely intensified. The worst feature of it is that Governors and police officials connive at this lynching policy and coöperate with the mobs, the planters, and other employers. For all of this Mr. Shay gives chapter and verse.

While Mr. Shay calls his book "The First Hundred Years" of Judge Lynch, much longer time than that has elapsed since lynching began. I am especially glad that he has brought out numerous lynching cases prior to 1861, for there is now a determined movement on foot, in connection with the new rewriting of the history of the South and especially of the slavery period and the Civil War, to "forget" these instances.

It is a monstrous misrepresentation of history to declare that this crime was "learned" from the Yankees. Mr. Shay tells only part of the story. His book would have gained weight had he gone into this aspect of the case more thoroughly. As it is he more than proves his point.

Oswald Garrison Villard, as the grandson of the Liberator, comes by his interest in the Negro naturally.

The Criminal Record

The Saturday Review's Guide to Detective Fiction

Title and Author	*Crime, Place, Sleuth*	*Summing Up*	*Verdict*
THE BEAST MUST DIE *Nicholas Blake* (*C. Day Lewis*) (Harpers: $2.)	Crime novelist Felix Lane plots murder as revenge on hit-&-run driver, but it takes Nigel Strangeways to discover who really killed Gloucestershire road-hog.	Extremely ingenious plotting, with Felix Lane's diary leading reader by the nose, provides double surprise in excellent, super-literate baffler.	Don't miss it
MIDNIGHT SAILING *Lawrence G. Blockman* (Harcourt, Brace: $2.)	Triple killing on trans-Pacific Jap steamer solved by newshawk ostensibly on trail of elusive heiress for big story.	Brisk action, lively dialog, fiery climax, and neat sleuthing by chap who for newspaperman . . . ain't such a bad detective."	Class A
MR. ZERO *Patricia Wentworth* (Lippincott: $2.)	English peer and butler slain by relentless blackmailer. Algy Somers—himself suspect—sees light in nick of time.	Very well bred and somewhat oversentimentalized—but killer is well concealed and final scene has its points.	Entertaining
THE CUT DIRECT *Alice Tilton* (Norton: $2.)	Carving knife eliminates man and woman. Leonidas Witherall, who looks like Shakespeare, apprehends assassin.	Knockabout comedy and galaxy of slightly addled characters minimize mystery. Murder, after all, is a serious matter.	Boisterous
MURDER IN SWITZERLAND *Edmund Snell* (Hillman-Curl: $2.)	Deadly "Spider," who kills inventor of artificial fog, unmasked by Janyon, frolicsome English lad turned secret agent.	Somewhat routine yarn of continental intrigue with villainy afoot in every chapter, sinister characters pussyfooting around, etc.	Time-passer
CLOUDS OF WITNESS AND THE DOCUMENTS IN THE CASE *Dorothy L. Sayers* (Harcourt, Brace: $2.)	(*a*)—Duke of Denver saved from gallows by slick work of brother Peter (Wimsey); (*b*) Science foils perpetrator of "perfect" crime.	Both with and without Wimsey these early Sayers stories show author at mystifying best—though second is on esoteric side.	Worth re-reading
THIS MAN IS DANGEROUS *Peter Cheyney* (Coward-McCann: $2.)	Kidnaper-killer Siegalla on the loose in England quenched after much mauling by Lemmy Caution, lad with lurid lingo.	Torrents of tough guy talk (slightly synthetic) may bog down some readers—but it's real Camembert for guys what crave action.	Caution!

Under the Sun

LOVE AT THE MISSION. By R. Hernekin Baptist. Boston: Little, Brown & Co. 1938. $2.50.

Reviewed by STUART CLOETE

STRANGE things still come out of Africa, and strange things come into the thoughts of those who live there—they come from the mountains and the veld and slowly eat their way into the human mind.

All novels dealing with Africa emphasize its tragedy. In them all, intellect is sacrificed to brutality. Matter is greater than mind in Africa and man, lost in these endless *morgen* of Karoo, mountains, bush, and lowveld, struggles vainly against the malignant forces of nature; against droughts, floods, ticks, and white ants, struggles until he gives up or is caught up and destroyed. The books of such novelists as Plomer, Olive Schreiner, Richard Dehan, Pauline Smith, Ethelreda Lewis, and Sarah Gertrude Millin show the impossibility of escape from such an environment and the corruption that ensues from it. The country is so big that there is nowhere to go. The distance between farms is so great that there is no one to talk to. "The Story of an African Farm" is no exaggeration. It is the truth. "The Dope Doctor" is the truth. "God's Stepchildren" is the story of a missionary and his demoralization. These novels will not be surpassed, and it is doubtful if they will be equalled.

Mr. Baptist has written the story of a Mission Station in Bantusiland. It deals with the lives of three girls, the daughters of a widowed missionary. His is an aseptic fatherhood; he neglects his daughters and devotes his life to translating the Bible into Bantusi. The girls, thrown back on their own resources, become introspective, perhaps unduly so, and wayward. The eldest, Hortense, falls victim to the charms of the East African servant of a neighborhood missionary. Another missionary, married to a woman much older than himself, falls in love with Madeleine, one of the younger girls. And the eldest, to save her sister from the clutches of the sinister East African who is also interested in her, encourages this all but adulterous relationship.

I do not think love at a mission is like this, or for that matter, love anywhere. It is not love which is described, it is not a mission (or at least I do not think it is) and it is not Africa. The characters are two-dimensional and move in a world that is utterly un-African, swimming like gold fish through a sexual fluid of the author's own invention. Presumably the strength of the book lies in its reversal of the accepted standards of miscegenation. This reversal would only become credible if it was explained. I am not prepared to state that under no circumstances would a missionary's daughter give herself willingly to a native, but before I can believe it I must have a detailed psychological study of her character. This book is as strong as the man in leopard skins who picks up papier mâché weights.

Stuart Cloete is the author of "The Turning Wheels."

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The New Books

Biography

FRANK MILLER OF MISSION INN. By Zona Gale. Appleton-Century. 1938. $2.

The Mission Inn, at Riverside, California, is a hostelry which might have come straight out of the pages of Myron Weagle's notebooks. But the central character of Mr. Lewis's "Work of Art" never approached, even on paper, the amazing synthesis of hotel, community center, tourist Mecca, museum, art colony, and church which Frank Miller achieved in an otherwise unremarkable California citrus town. The Inn has to be seen to be believed, with its Cloister Music Room, its collections of famous bells and of crosses, its Court of the Orient, and the astonishing St. Francis *atrio* and chapel. Its more or less successfully California-Spanish blocks and wings are everywhere adorned, inside and out, with a prodigal confusion of pictures, statuary, tapestries, and historical objects.

The man who created this enterprise was typical of many of the ideas and enthusiasms which have made Southern California the sort of place it is. Besides bringing his Inn to a shrewd success, Frank Miller worked through most of a long life for the cause of world peace. He organized the first Easter dawn services on Mt. Rubidoux. In a dozen ways he left his mark upon his community. Here was a rare opportunity for a biography which might underline the relation between a man's life and the place where he lived it. Miss Gale has not taken it; her short, over-accented book is hardly more than an unanalytic citation of a remarkable life. It is likely to please Frank Miller's family and friends, but it represents, for the general reader, a lost opportunity. More's the pity.

W. S.

Fiction

CHARACTERS IN ORDER OF APPEARANCE. By Romilly Cavan. Macmillan. 1938. $2.50.

This novel has the rather irritating charm of some young thing who is just a little too much made up. Now affected, now unselfconscious, its alterations are rather hard on one's nerves. It begins with the meeting, on a rustic September morning, of a boy called Mark Tristram Brown and an elderly gentleman named Abdy Sumsion. Mark is a greengrocer's son, educated "above his station" as he puts it, and ambitious to write a play. Abdy Sumsion (his name alone is a dead give-away) is an old offender. He has appeared in English fiction often enough already—sometimes he is a tramp, sometimes an artist, sometimes an itinerant preacher, and always unsparing in his philosophy. In this reincarnation, he is a scholar with a taste for alcohol, and the idea is that we, the readers, should like him very much.

It is pleasant to record that, after this inauspicious beginning, the novel improves considerably. It introduces Mark to the Verity family, while Abdy Sumsion assumes the comparatively tolerable role of a one-man chorus, and intermittent at that. The Veritys are quite amoral and quite attractive and more than a little over-written; they are also likable. Mark makes friends with them, quarrels with them, and disappears from their life for several years, during which he writes a successful play.

Then he meets Abdy Sumsion in a London pub, and that sage leads him once more to the Veritys. Mrs. Verity is a little faded, but the two girls have grown up; and you are very soon apprised of the fact that Mark is destined to marry Moira. He does so; and the rest of the novel is concerned with the question—Can Mark, who is beginning to lose his grip on the theater, make a go of it with Moira, who is on her way to becoming a successful dress designer? The movies have run this particular problem almost to death, but, with the help of some neat characterizations, Miss Cavan manages to keep it on its feet. She even contrives to keep it running, for at the end of the book we still don't quite know what is going to become of Mark and Moira. This is one of those take-it-or-leave-it novels; but those who take it will get some pleasure along the way.

G. D.

FRUIT IN SEASON. By Anthony Thorne. Random House. 1938. $2.50.

The minor English novel is usually a piece of smooth writing about nothing in particular; "Fruit in Season," without ever getting out of its class, is a superior specimen on both counts. Anthony Thorne writes with felicity and economy not only about landscape and old houses, but about people, and his book has more body than most summer imports from England. Four children and their governess come for the summer to the country house they love, and have hardly renewed their acquaintance with the trees and gardens before the sudden death of their dipsomaniac mother sends them away. Years later the eldest daughter spends her savings to reopen the house for a fortnight's holiday for the four, with an accompanying wife and husband. Two of three kinds of tragedy strike them, yet they are left with a sense of solidarity amid diversity not too often seen in the families one actually knows. Very pleasant reading.

E. D.

SMOULDERING FIRE. By D. E. Stevenson. Farrar & Rinehart. 1938. $2.

The touch of lemon which has hitherto given character to Miss Stevenson's excellent prune soufflés has been forgotten in this latest confection of hers, the romance of an impoverished Scottish chieftain. Scarcely a page of "Smouldering Fire" shows signs of having been written by the deft and entertaining author of "Miss Buncle's Book": it is Florence Barclay at her least realistic, but without her authority.

How The MacAslan found his dream princess again, years after his first glimpse of her; how she had suffered with the rake to whom she had been married and from whom she was now in the process of getting a divorce; how appearances were against her and MacAslan that stormy night when they were wrecked on a lonely island; what use the villain threatened to make of these appearances; and how MacAslan's faithful follower saved his chief—all this any schoolgirl could tell you. Moreover, any schoolgirl could tell it to you rather better than Miss Stevenson, to whose nature melodrama is so obviously alien. The reader accustomed to her humor and intelligence and skill keeps expecting her to observe the absurdity of her characters and situations and exchange an occasional wink with him; but he ends the story puzzled by Miss Stevenson's failure to do justice to her own sense of humor.

It is hard to believe that she is unconscious of the unreality of her principal characters, especially since she has juxtaposed to them Mrs. Hetherington Smith, who is one of the pleasantest and solidest and warmest creatures in English fiction since Mr. Polly's fat woman at the Inn. She sits there in Ardfalloch, and her shoes and her corset hurt her, and she wishes she were back in the old days in the Edgware Road, where things seemed more real. So does the reader.

K. S.

WOMAN ABOUT TOWN. By Allis McKay. Macmillan. 1938. $2.50.

Here is rather an ambitious novel about working women inside and outside the office which, somehow, ends in being nothing more than second-rate summer reading.

Leila Gerston, who is the best fashion-copy writer in Chicago, besides being young and pretty and not quite divorced, has the bad luck to fall in love with one of the men in her office. The story of their affair finally ends when, after getting her divorce, Leila lets the man go because she knows that he doesn't really want to marry her. The advertising background

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is undoubtedly authentic enough but, unfortunately, quite dull because the author knows too much about her subject and tells it all. The lay reader can hardly be expected to maintain an interest in page after page on how little advertising pamphlets are put together. Moreover, the hard-working, hard-drinking advertisers that people the book are all of a pattern—the women all a little hysterical, the men all a little dense, and no one very convincing. No doubt Miss McKay meant to write a fine, full story about the problems of the self-reliant business woman, which is an interesting subject, and her failure to do so must be laid to her limitations as a writer rather than to her intentions.

L. A.

Miscellaneous

A BOOK OF BIRDS. By Mary Priestley. Macmillan. 1938. $2.50.

THE SKY'S THEIR HIGHWAY. By Kenneth Williamson. Dodd, Mead. 1938. $3.50.

These two English books on birds should be noted for inclusion in bird lovers' libraries. We say English books on birds rather than books on English birds, because both of them being description, and often literary description, of the habits, charm, and personality of birds, they transcend a regional interest. The same illustrator, C. F. Tunnicliffe, has done effective woodcuts for both volumes. Mrs. Priestley's book is an anthology from a wide range of occasional or constant describers of birds—most of them English. We do not know why she omitted Thoreau on the night hawk, and Muir on the water ouzel, but her choices generally are very good. Mr. Williamson's observations are his own, and interesting with that steady passion for the phenomena of nature which makes British literature so rich. The Priestley collection should show even the cockney what birds have meant to English literature especially. Mr. Williamson's book should make converts to the most innocent of all country sports. Both books show that the mawkish, sentimental expressions which used to be regarded as nature literature were only a sticky episode in the history of a craft.

H. S. C.

FOREIGN AFFAIRS, 1919–1937. By E. L. Hasluck. Macmillan (Cambridge University Press). 1938. $2.50.

It is a gigantic task to cram the political history of the whole world since 1919, less the British Empire, into the pages of a single book; and it is doubly difficult when the method employed is not philosophical but descriptive. Names follow names; dates run together in kaleidoscopic disarray; detail piles on detail until a shapeless mountain of fact confronts a bewildered reader seeking enlightenment. Mr. Hasluck is not unconscious of this danger. He has done his best, by competent organization of material and an occasional light touch in treatment, to avoid it. Unfortunately, he has achieved only partial success.

The most stimulating chapters of "Foreign Affairs, 1919-1937" are those dealing with specific topics—the trenchant criticism of the Versailles settlement which opens the book, and the balanced summary of the work of the League of Nations which closes it. Between these terminal essays stretches a long morass of historical summarization, country by country. Where space permits—as in the case of Germany, Italy, and the Soviet Union—Mr. Hasluck has given a well-balanced survey of political developments. Neither the fervent sympathizers nor the diehard opponents of these dictatorial regimes, and of the philosophical rationalizations which they defend, will be satisfied with his middle-of-the-road analysis. As an introduction to students, who should not be spoon-fed on some one else's prejudices, this is excellent; as a diet for the intelligent reader looking for factual synthesis, for critical discussion of ideologies, it is feckless stuff indeed.

And when Mr. Hasluck leaves the European continent in search of new countries to depict, his methods are still more inadequate. For here he is obviously in a field with which he is less familiar. His sections are sometimes excessively brief—six pages for Japan, two for Brazil, four for Palestine—and offer little more than the thinnest sort of background material, by no means free from minor inaccuracies. Readers will be amused by his patronizing condescension to Americans, whom he pictures as predominantly a people enmeshed in the toils of crime, lawlessness, and racketeering, of which they are struggling manfully to rid themselves.

D. H. P.

PERSONALS

ADVERTISEMENTS will be accepted in this column for things wanted or unwanted; personal services to let or required; literary or publishing offers not easily classified elsewhere; miscellaneous items appealing to a select and intelligent clientèle; exchange and barter of literary property or literary services; jobs wanted, houses or camps for rent, tutoring, travelling companions, ideas for sale; communications of a decorous nature, expressions of opinion (limited to fifty lines). All advertisements must be consonant with the purposes and character of The Saturday Review. Rates 7 cents per word, including signature. Count two additional words for Box and Number. Payment in full must be received ten days in advance of publication. Address Personal Dept., Saturday Review, 25 West 45th Street, New York City.

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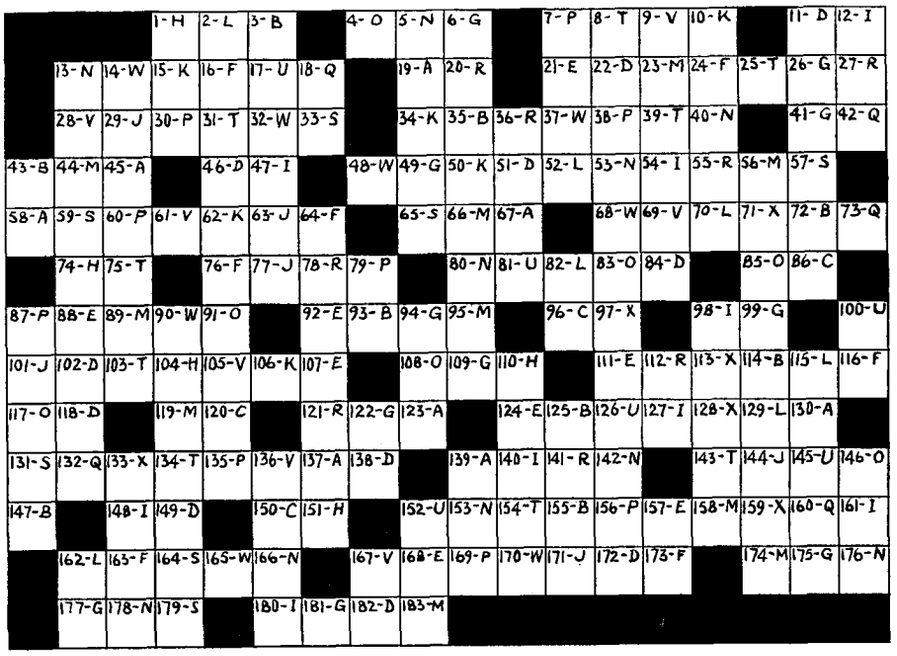
Double-Crostics: No. 227

By ELIZABETH S. KINGSLEY



DIRECTIONS

To solve this puzzle, you must guess twenty-four words, the definitions of which are given in the column headed DEFINITIONS. The letters in each word to be guessed are numbered. These numbers appear under the dashes in the column headed WORDS. There is a dash for each letter in the required word. The key letters in the squares are for convenience, indicating to which word in the definitions each letter in the diagram belongs. When you have guessed a word, fill it in on the dashes; then write each letter in the correspondingly numbered square on the puzzle diagram. When the squares are all filled in you will find (by reading from left to right) a quotation from a famous author. Reading up and down the letters mean nothing. The black squares indicate ends of words; therefore words do not necessarily end at the right side of the diagram.

When the column headed WORDS is filled in, the initial letters spell the name of the author and the title of the piece from which the quotation has been taken. Authority for spelling and definitions is Webster's New International Dictionary (second edition).

The solution of last week's *Double-Crostic* will be found on page 18 of this issue.

DEFINITIONS

A. English author, friend of Shelley.

B. Advisory.

C. Holy Roman Emperor (962-973).

D. Russian composer (1839-1881).

E. Juxtaposed.

F. Development; growth.

G. Interpretive.

H. Opera by Monteverde.

I. Bragging bully.

J. Character in "Macbeth."

K. Exhibits agitation (jocose).

L. Species of the genus *Passer*.

M. Son of Odysseus.

N. Pertaining to a citizen of foreign birth.

O. Heroine in one of "Idylls of the King."

P. Book of the Pentateuch.

Q. Consumer.

R. Departed quickly (slang).

S. Selfhood.

T. Crafty devices.

U. Apathy.

V. Notwithstanding.

W. Certified.

X. American novelist (1870-1902).

WORDS

A.	139 123 67 130 19 58 137 45
B.	93 35 43 155 125 114 72 3 147
C.	86 150 96 120
D.	51 11 22 138 102 46 84 172 149 182 118
E.	88 107 21 157 111 168 124 92
F.	76 64 116 24 16 163 173
G.	49 99 109 41 6 175 94 122 177 181 26
H.	151 104 1 110 74
I.	98 127 180 54 161 140 148 12 47
J.	101 144 171 29 63 77
K.	106 34 62 15 50 10
L.	52 162 129 70 115 2 82
M.	119 56 158 183 95 174 44 66 89 23
N.	5 40 80 178 53 13 153 142 166 176
O.	91 85 4 108 117 146 83
P.	7 79 169 156 60 135 87 30 38
Q.	18 132 160 42 73
R.	55 141 78 121 112 20 27 36
S.	164 131 57 179 59 65 33
T.	8 154 39 31 75 25 143 103 134
U.	126 100 17 152 81 145
V.	61 136 9 28 105 69 167
W.	14 48 68 170 90 32 37 165
X.	113 97 128 71 159 133

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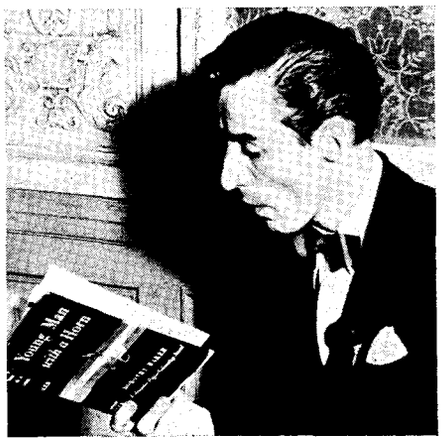
Trade Winds

BY P. E. G. QUERCUS

THE weather at The Fantods is really comical. ☞It makes Old Q homesick for the Canal Zone. ☞It is due, of course, to F.D.R. being in equatorial regions; which created a bustle of high pressure down there and pushed a lot of tropical humidity up this way. ☞It's as damp here as a novel by Maysie Greig or a rainstorm off Cape Maysi in the Windward Passage (if you know your Grace Line). ☞Viz, sopping. ☞Old Q can't smoke because his matches are a pastiche. He can't wear underclothes because the buttons have rotted off. When the telephone rings it shakes the foggy air in the room and a little shower condenses from the ceiling; it makes a baby rainbow round Old Q's study lamp. He went to the movies for the first time in months; sitting in that air-cooled dungeon a crop of small liver-colored toadstools grew on his forehead. His old seersucker trews act like blotting paper; they suck up all the moist; like Ophelia's garments, "heavy with their drink." He can't use the electric heater to toast them because it is needed to cheer up the horned toads given us by Dr. Rahn of the Biological Lab at Cold Spring Harbor. These toads come from the hot dry climate in Texas; then we hear over the radio that Texas has the worst flood of all.

☞If you need any horned toads try Snake King, dealer in reptiles, Snakeville, Texas. ☞There are drowned spiders in the bathtub (black widows we hope) and the crust of Old Q's Sunday cheese soufflé caved in with a thud. ☞We are watching Grover Whalen anxiously; he was built on Made Land; if he caves in too the year 1939 might as well not come. ☞We are recommending to the Editor of the next edition of Bartlett's (20 years hence) Mr. Whalen's agonized yell when Howard Hughes landed on the wrong runway: "He's loused up all our arrangements." ☞This is the weather to observe which books were bound in haste. Oggie Nash's *I'm a Stranger Here Myself* has cockled open like a ripe cauliflower; as though begging to be read. ☞Only the publishers who have slept peacefully on their books after binding can be sure that they won't warp. ☞It took this spell of ten days' continuous rain to show us the perfect loveliness of a drenched decumbent weeping willow tree (*Salix Babylonica* or *saule pleureur*) which now shows its foliage in echelon with more exquisite perspective. ☞Linguistic note: the Cunard-White Star baggage labels use *Wharfs* as a plural instead of *Wharves*. This by analogy with Snow White etc.?

☞Vincent Starrett's agreeable little volume of essays *Persons from Porlock (and Other Interruptions)* just out from Normandie House, Chicago, reminded us of the most famous Person from Porlock episode in modern writing: Conrad's interruption by the General's Daughter described in *A Personal Record*. ☞Then we found ourself rereading some Conrad, viz. *Twixt Land and Sea;* one of the less known of Conrad's books and certainly one of the most movingly skilful and surprising. It is not the sort of thing hasty Announcers would be likely to notice, but it has all the bouquet of vintage Conrad, including his delicious oddities of misusing *shall* and *will* and getting caught in stays when he tries a tack toward the comic. ☞Considerably more entertaining than some crime-and-punishment yarns that will be loudly touted is *Mr. Zero* by Patricia Wentworth; don't be put off by its jacket; it is engagingly written for the sophisticated shocker trade, has real comedy and charm and a surprising climax that absolutely clicks. Belongs on the Dorothy Sayers shelf. We've always been scared away from Patricia Wentworth's books by the appalling jackets; now we shall read her with interest. ☞The reissue of the o.p. Dorothy Sayers titles in three combination volumes is a blessing for summer relaxationists.



Dave Tough, Benny Goodman's drummer, takes time out to read Dorothy Baker's novel of swing musicians.

☞Buying eggplant at a suburban grocery store called *Carew's* suggested our noble old friend Thomas Carew; he of the burnished lyric: "In your sweet dividing throat She winters and keeps warm her note." ☞This we always wanted to rewrite as "In your sweet dividing breast She winters and keeps warm her nest." Thus, in perfect 17th century vein, we would get the double play on *dividing;* not only as a technical term in the music of that day, but as a familiar (not too familiar) thoracic homage. ☞This is one of the few real improvements we could suggest for Carew; according to the dictionaries his 300th obit is due this or next year, and we want to be the first to say that he has given us, for a tenth of his deathtime, the most perfect pleasure.

☞A traveler floodbound in New Jersey tells us the startling news that the Hotel Woodrow Wilson at New Brunswick has changed its name to the Hotel Roger Smith. ☞We don't know anything about Roger Smith except that he offers a chain of cocktails at 25c, which we approve. ☞When a young kinswoman sailed for a year in Europe we gave her only one parental advice: stick to gin-and-ginger. ☞Two extraordinary skilful bits of writing-with-a-purpose were the little speeches made in Paris by King George VI and President Le Brun; they have gone into our private Anthology of Pieces That Had Something to Say; though what they were actually saying was not always evident on the surface. ☞This collection, a History of Other People's Time, will be available, in many volumes, a reasonable time after our funeral. Its motto will be *Deo Erexit Quercus*. ☞At the Biological Lab we learned from Dr. George Corner that Jimson Weed is really Jamestown Weed; so called by Capt. John Smith because of its peculiar effect in a cocktail served by Pocahontas. ☞Another experienced skipper, Capt. Felix Riesenberg, has returned from the Coast and is at Bronxville, N. Y., (flooded, probably) working on his History of the American Merchant Marine, 1900 - 1940. ☞Felix Riesenberg's book about N. Y. C., with the astonishingly beautiful photos by Alexander Alland (announced by Macmillan) should knock everyone for several bucks; we put it at the head of our list for next Christmas.

☞Grenville Vernon, editor of the Dial Press, notes in a foreword to that house's autumn list that some years ago the Dial imprint gained no less than nine Book Club selections in less than three years. The revival of Dial activity, under new management, hopes to continue the prestige of a notable tradition. Among the authors represented in the Dial list for next season will be Ford Madox Ford, André Gide, and John Anderson's history of the American stage. ☞When we saw the headline "Leaves in De Grasse" we thought of course it was something about Walt Whitman. But it was the author of *How to Win Friends,* etc., sailing in the French Line; funny, we can't think of his name. ☞Louise Perry, of the Periwinkle Press at Norton, Mass., writes that she and her partner, Katharine Burton, are spending a month at the Pear Tree Press at Bognor Regis, Sussex, England, learning something of British ideas and traditions in the private press business. ☞The summer number of *The Horn Book,* that always admirable magazine which discusses books and reading for children, includes an article by Bertha Mahony Miller about Dorothy Lathrop, talented illustrator of many beautiful books. Mrs. Miller mentions a remarkable art exhibit in Albany which we also saw last autumn. It was a showing of the work of a mother and two daughters: the late Mrs. Pulis Lathrop and her daughters Dorothy and Gertrude. We were glad to read in the same issue Dorothy Lathrop's speech of acceptance of the first Caldecott Medal, in which she remarked to the audience "I can't help wishing that all of you were animals." She felt that, as a frequent illustrator of animals, she would know better what to say. ☞A correspondent in *The Horn Book,* Mrs. F. C. Sayers, reproaches Hugh Walpole for having in his novel *John Cornelius* reproduced the incidents of Hans Andersen's life in a different century and setting. ☞Messrs. Simon & Schuster, always masters of the double and triple entendre, are expecting a success of something more than esteem with their new trick, called *What Every Girl Should Know Before Marriage.* It's a cook book.

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